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## PM: I, not Levy, will lead peace process

DAVID MAKOVSKY

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu asserted his primacy over the peace process - and an angry Foreign Minister David Levy - last night, saying he was given a mandate through direct elections to lead the process.

In an interview with Channel 2 last night, Netanyahu said he would continue to direct the negotiations. "Israel has only one prime minister," he said.

The premier also defended the exclusion of security officers from consultations on peace process issues. Netanyahu said the various security branches must offer their own intelligence assessments, but they should not have a policy role, as they did during the Labor government.

"I told them I don't want them in the peace process," he said.

At the same time, however, Netanyahu sharply criticized Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee chairman MK Uzi Landau who accused the army officers involved in peace negotiations of being "puppets" of Labor.

There were unconfirmed reports last night that for the third time in two months, Levy was considering resigning. Levy held phone conversations yesterday with his political ally, National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon.

Channel 1 reported last night that Levy was holed up in his Beit She'an home and was refusing to attend a cabinet meeting today.

The immediate issue is whether Levy will head a steering committee on negotiating with the Palestinians. Netanyahu's remarks left little doubt that the head of this committee would be someone he trusted, but he denied reports he had decided to give the position to Cabinet Secretary Danny Navet.

Netanyahu's remarks came after Foreign Ministry officials, and reportedly Levy himself, complained that the Prime Minister's Office was keeping them out of the peace process. Levy canceled a weekly lunch scheduled yesterday with the premier.

In separate interviews on Channels 1 and 2 last night, Netanyahu offered Levy a "partnership," but made clear that he, as premier, would lead.

Officials in the Prime Minister's Office insisted the premier has sought to keep Levy abreast of developments by a variety of means, namely lunches, regular phone calls, and inviting Levy to consultations with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and other ministers.

These officials insist that despite Levy's complaints, he has been privy to all major developments, including the "Lebanon first" initiative and Netanyahu's secret trip to London almost two weeks ago to meet with Jordan's King Hussein.

Apart from the steering committee dealing with Palestinians, the Foreign Ministry has other complaints. Apart from the resident ambassador, no Foreign Ministry representative accompanied the premier to Egypt or Jordan. But this often occurred during the Labor government, as well.

Foreign Ministry officials also fear that there is an intention to set up a "mini-Foreign Ministry"

(Continued on Page 8)

## Syria rejects 'Lebanon first' talks

News agencies

SYRIA yesterday rejected Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's offer to resume peace talks on a "Lebanon first" basis, saying his proposal was only sweet-talk that has nothing to do with peacemaking.

The official daily *Tishreen* said Netanyahu wanted the negotiations to mainly discuss Israel's security problem in south Lebanon, but not the withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"This talk does not mean anything for the making of peace," *Tishreen* said. "It is mere nice words which are baseless. The issue is not the resumption of the negotiations but the essence of what the negotiations would deal with."

"What kind of negotiations does Netanyahu want to resume while he still rejects withdrawal from the Golan and couples this rejection with the expansion of settlements and bringing more Jews to settle in the occupied Syrian lands?" it added.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara told the cabinet's weekly session later yesterday that Netanyahu's government was still refusing to continue the peace process on the basis of the land-for-peace principle and UN resolutions.

"If Israel is serious about reviving the peace process, it is required to affirm its commitments and respect its pledges without any disguise," one official quoted Shara as saying.

He did not specify which pledges Shara was referring to.

*Tishreen* reiterated that Damascus was still committed to the peace process but urged Netanyahu to declare his readiness to pull back from "occupied Arab land."

(Continued on Page 8)

# Soldier killed in Lebanon

## Netanyahu: We won't let IDF be used as punching bag

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and DAVID MAKOVSKY

HIZBULLAH gunmen repeatedly shelled an IDF outpost in south Lebanon yesterday, killing an army medic as he raced to help two wounded soldiers.

The dead soldier was identified as Staff-Sgt. Tehauhu Aslan, 20, from the Circassian village of Kfar Kama in the Galilee. He is to be buried in his village this morning at 10:00 in a traditional Circassian funeral. The local council head has asked the IDF to allow all of the Circassian soldiers to attend the funeral.

Aslan is survived by his father, two brothers and a sister. He enlisted in the IDF's minority unit, in which both of his older brothers had served, and went on to complete a medic's course.

Aslan is the 17th IDF soldier to be killed in Lebanon this year. Sixty-nine soldiers have been wounded.

"If Hizbullah fights us" we will fight Hizbullah," Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said. "If anybody is deluding himself into thinking that Israel or the IDF will be a punching bag for terrorists, he is mistaken."

Netanyahu did not specify what Israel's response would be, but said that it will be made manifestly evident.

Netanyahu expressed concern that if steps toward peace are not taken in south Lebanon there would be an "escalation," which he said would be bad for both Syria and Israel.

In an interview on Channel 1 last night, Netanyahu reiterated Israel's willingness to leave Lebanon if the violence stops, saying this would be in both Israel's and Syria's interests.

OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine said Iranian advisers are aiding Hizbullah in



Soldiers in the security zone fire at Hizbullah targets yesterday in response to shelling which killed an army medic. (Yaron Kaminsky/Ha'aretz)

Lebanon. He also blamed Syria for allowing Hizbullah to rearm.

"[Hizbullah] is making efforts to get more efficient and sophisticated weapons," Levine said.

"I know Hizbullah is stocking the villages along the front with Katyushas, weapons and ammunition, with the Syrians' knowledge, so that if we attack them they won't need to resupply during battle," Levine said.

"Solutions are complicated. This is a war. Hizbullah has been under pressure for the past few weeks.

They waged a lot of attempted attacks. In more than five clashes they suffered more than 10 killed," Levine said.

He said Hizbullah left its dead and wounded in the field and fled.

"It is returning to its tactic of shooting from afar and we will have to deal with this," Levine said.

Levine told reporters the incident actually began on Monday when Hizbullah started shelling an IDF position near Bint Jbeil with 120mm mortars fired from near the village of near Braachit, east of Kiryat Shmona. Two soldiers were wounded then, one seriously, and Aslan was involved in their rescue.

"This morning the barrage started again and we had two soldiers who were slightly wounded but who continued to function in their tank despite their wounds. The medic who tried to reach the force had taken cover in a bunker, but was killed outright when [the bunker] received a direct hit," Levine said.

Sgt. Avinoam Talmon, one of the wounded, told journalists from his hospital bed that he continued fighting despite his wounds.

"I didn't know I was hit until I started feeling pains. The first thing I did was try to give them back what they were giving us," he said.

The IDF and SLA artillery responded with a heavy barrage on suspected Hizbullah hideouts north of the zone. There were no reports of casualties from the retaliatory shelling.

Hizbullah gunmen also set off a roadside bomb near an IDF patrol as it passed near the fortified position, SLA sources told Reuters.

## Levy barely functioning as foreign minister

BACKGROUND  
 DAVID MAKOVSKY

DAVID Levy is barely functioning in his position as foreign minister, a variety of sources say. He is avoiding diplomatic meetings and instead generally cloisters himself with a party cronies during the few hours a day that he decides to visit his office.

It remains unclear if Levy is acting this way because he feels he is being circumvented with regard to the peace process, or whether the problem is larger. While Levy can contend that he is being ignored on this major issue and therefore has little to do, the foreign minister is supposed to be involved in other matters as well. After all, Israel has ties with some 160 countries and maintains links with a variety of international organizations and multilateral forums.

After being in the job for almost two months, Levy has yet to appoint a permanent director-general or a personal staff, including a diplomatic adviser. Levy has not yet resolved the clash between Eitan Bentsur, an experienced professional diplomat who has been named acting director-general, and his own political aide, Ya'acov Bardugo, who covets the title.

With a virtual empty daily schedule, sources say Levy often spends the

(Continued on Page 8)

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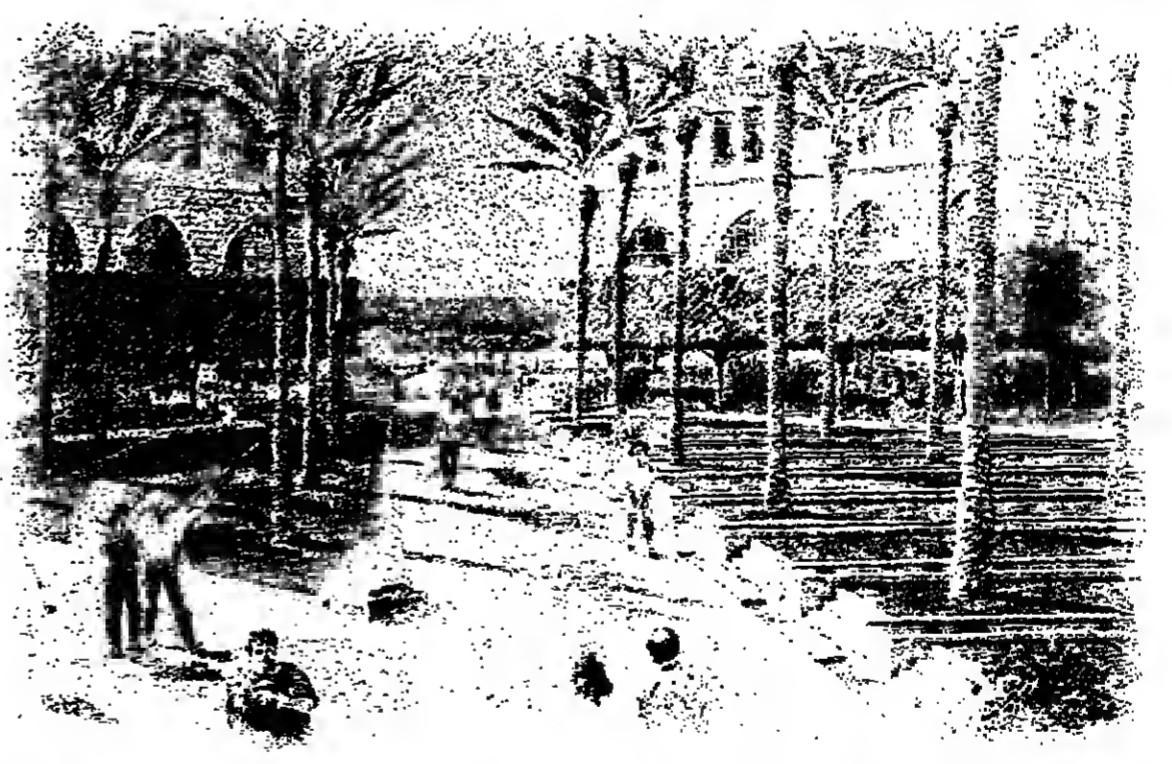
Please note that the number 5 has been added to all the phone and fax numbers of the main office of The Jerusalem Post (all starting with the number 3).

For example, the phone number of the switchboard - 315666 - is now 531-5666

Other changes: the phone number of the J.P. Funds is now 623-3986; of the Book Department and Post Mart, 624-1282, and their fax number is 624-1212.

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# PA planning to take over eastern Jerusalem school

THE Palestinian Authority moved this week to take over a well-known Arab school in eastern Jerusalem long run by the Jordanian government, in apparent defiance of the government's attempt to enforce a ban on PA activity in the city.

The Dar El-Eitam School, with campuses in the Old City and Azzariya, was previously part of the Moslem Wakf school system that received financing from Amman.

School director Razi Jabari said he was informed earlier this week by PA officials of their decision to take over the school, and was waiting for instructions from Amman on how to act.

BILL HUTMAN

# Khader optimistic compromise will be reached over PA office flap

A SENIOR Internal Security Ministry official met secretly with Palestinian Authority Council member Hatem Abdel Khader yesterday in an effort to work out a compromise over the council's Jerusalem office, which the government wants closed.

worked out whereby Khader would continue operating the office in Beit Hanina if he submitted written assurances that he was not representing the PA. However, no other confirmation was available about the report.

The proposed compromise would meet the government's demand there not be any PA activity in Jerusalem.

Khader met Amit Glusgo, a senior adviser to Internal Security Minister Avidor Kahalani, at the Hyan Hotel in Jerusalem. A ministry spokesman confirmed the meeting took place, but declined to give any details.

"There are negotiations going on to work this thing out," Khader said yesterday. "There is a problem, and we both want to solve it."

Israel Radio reported last night that a compromise had been

Ministry sources, however, were more pessimistic, saying little new came out of the meeting. In the past, Khader has openly denied the office he runs in his living room is connected with the PA.

"Hatem will continue to receive the public in his home, as he did in the past," he added.

### SOCIAL & PERSONAL

THE WEEKLY MEETING of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today at 1:00 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street. Gloria Menzies will speak on health.



Tracy Brown plants a tree in memory of her father, US commerce secretary Ron Brown, yesterday, as Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, her brother Michael (center), and Jewish National Fund President Moshe Rivlin look on. The Israel-American Chamber of Commerce dedicated a grove of 4,000 trees in the Judean Hills to Brown, who died in a plane crash in Croatia in April. (Reuters)

# PA council: Suspend talks if settlements expand

THE Palestinian legislative council recommended yesterday that the executive council headed by Yasser Arafat "study the possibility of suspending negotiations" with Israel if the government goes ahead with plans to expand settlements or takes other steps seen as obstructing the peace process.

Speaker Ahmed Qreia said at the special meeting, held in the Education Ministry building in Ramallah, that the key word was "study" and that there was no plan to halt negotiations yet. "At this moment we don't want to stop but in future we may ask that they stop," he said.

JON IMMANUEL

Both the council and a committee appointed by Arafat are planning investigations, the first time that two Palestinian investigations into the same event have been ordered.

Local Government Minister Saeh Erekat described the death of Jumayal as a mistake, but not a symptom of general human rights abuse.

Arafat himself described the decision to expand settlements as "a flagrant violation" of the Oslo accords and called on Israel to renew final-status talks.

Dr. Azmi Shuaibi, a former sports and youth minister, said that "we want to say that by his actions [Prime Minister Binyamin] Netanyahu has practically

stopped the peace process. His policy is clear now. He regards the settlements as being on the same level as Palestinian towns. He said that it was not fair that while Palestinians could build in their towns, settlers could not build in their settlements. He forgets that settlers can build in Israel and Palestinians cannot."

The death of Ibrahim Hudeid, who was shot during the riot in Tulkarim on Friday, has generated talk of a conspiracy involving Israel to undermine the PA.

Three Labor MKs - former committee chairman Haggai Merom, Haim Ramon and Dalia Itzik - and Meretz MK Ran Cohen called for Landau's resignation from the committee chair.

Former prime minister Shimon Peres called Landau's statements "baseless, unfounded and scandalous." Peres said the military is bound to the government and has to give its professional military opinion, but does not have to take responsibility for the results.

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid said the relationship between the political and military echelons had never been so bad.

"I don't think one issues orders for such violations," Erekat said. "Personally I could not face my wife and daughters over what happened in Nablus. It is not really systematic. We are merely two years old. This mistake happened. We want to ensure this mistake will not be repeated." He recommended training programs in human rights for the police, sponsored by western countries.

Landau said it is important to hear the opinions of IDF commanders, but only as one voice among many and without any political overtones.

Landau originally made the statements about the politicization during a Likud Party meeting Monday night. He accused some IDF senior officers of being yes-men for the previous government and acting like gamblers who risked disproportionate sums of money to try and regain their original losses.

Landau said the cabinet would determine how to carry out the agreements signed by the previous government.

ERekat, from Jericho, denied claims by human rights groups that seven men have been tortured to death in Gaza and Jericho jails since the PA took control there in May 1994. He said the correct number was three, as the other four died from "natural causes."

Landau said he had not taken the whole IDF of politicization, but only some officers and former officers. The supreme example, he said, is former chief of staff Ehud Barak, who became the Labor government's foreign minister shortly after retiring from the IDF.

Landau said, "I didn't make the statements about all the officers, but about the group which is intervening in political affairs at unprecedented levels. There must be a complete differentiation between politics and the military. I'm sure the Likud government realizes this. And if there are any doubts, the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee will ensure that the IDF is not involved in politics."

He called on MKs and ministers to avoid involving the IDF command in political disputes and stressed that the professional opinion of the military must be heard, though it is the government which makes the decisions. He expressed confidence in the IDF and its commanders.

"Anyone concerned about the future of [Israeli] society must speak with care," Stern added.

Landau refused to mention specific names other than Barak, but other right-wing MKs criticized Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan and former OC Central Command Ilan Biran for participating in talks with the Palestinians.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai (Likud), a recently retired major-general, issued a response rejecting Landau's criticism.

Landau said the IDF and its commanders had never been so bad.

LIAT COLLINS

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# Porush halts salvage dig in Modi'in area to check for graves

DEPUTY Housing Minister Meir Porush yesterday sent home archeologists who had been working on a salvage dig in the Modi'in area, saying he believed there were Jewish graves in the area that should not be disturbed.

"Once they stop the archeologists from their research, we lose our ability to study history, the origins of this country... It affects our culture, our knowledge of history, and the ability to live a normal life in this country," said Yoram Tsafir, former head of the archeology department at Hebrew University.

Tsafir said he expected many digs and construction projects to be halted in the future because "in every place in Israel you will find bones."

Yossi Levy, an archeologist with the Antiquities Authority, said it was the first time the Housing Ministry had halted a dig because of suspicion that graves were in the area.

Bar-Ilan University mourns the tragic death of JUDITH K. HURWICH and extends condolences to Her sister: Belda Lindenbaum, Past President of the American Friends of Bar-Ilan University Her husband: Marcel and the entire family.

Kehillat Yedidya Baka, Jerusalem We mourn the tragic loss of our friend, member, and supporter JUDITH HURWICH and extend condolences to her family.

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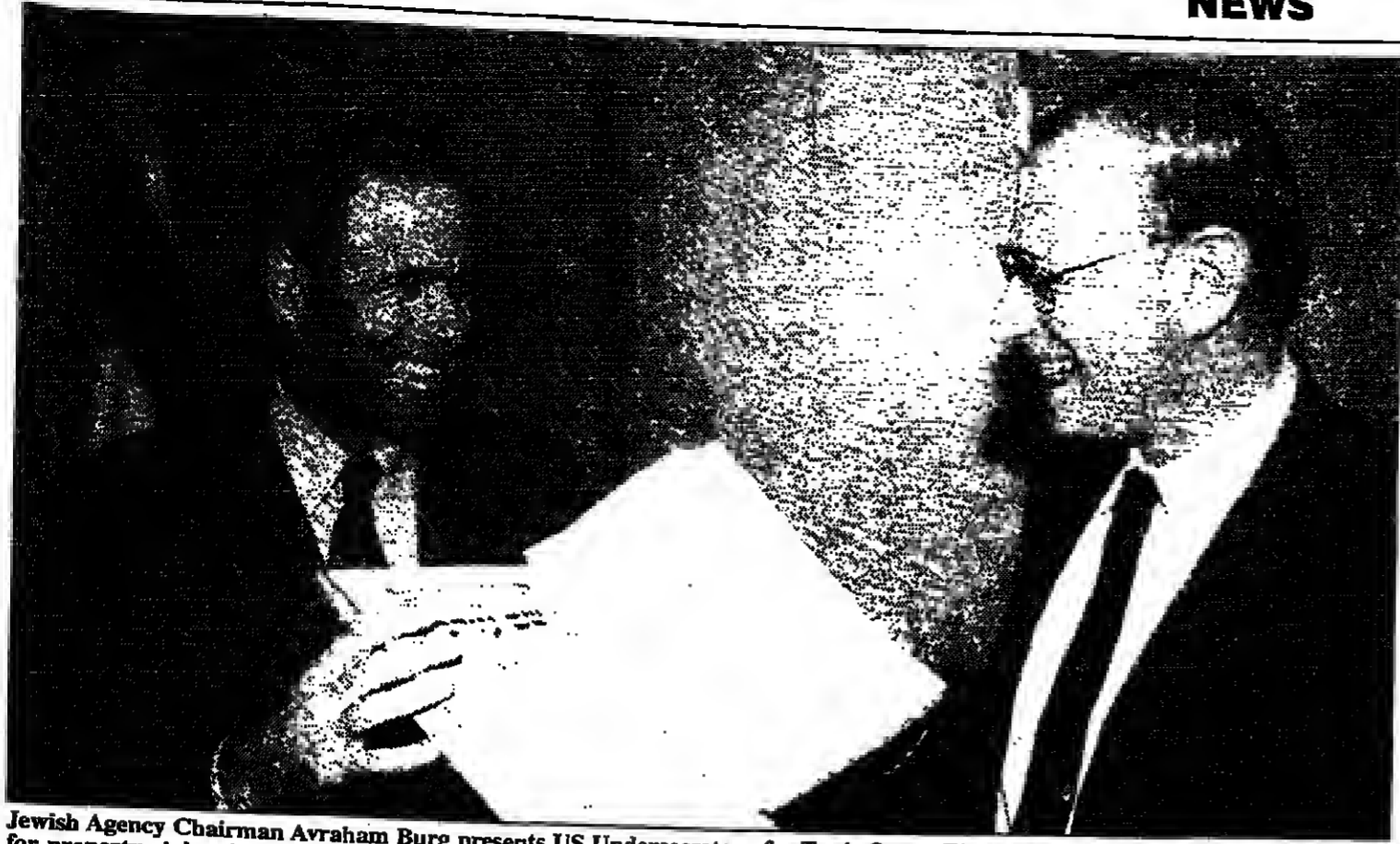
The Sadie Rennert Women's Institute of Torah Studies We share in the grief and shock of her family at the tragic death of our friend and co-founder JUDITH KAUFMAN HURWICH whose love of life and learning was an inspiration to us all. Malke Bina, Educational Director Lili Weil, Chairwoman of the Board Members of the Board of Governors

Sanz Medical Center Lanlado Hospital We mourn the passing of our friend and colleague DORANNE WEBER Founding President of the Netanya Friends of Lanlado a true example of a "Woman of Valor" and extend sincere condolences to her children and family. International Board of Trustees Board of Directors - Israel Netanya Supporters of Lanlado Hospital

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Handwritten note: האנא מן האל



Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg presents US Undersecretary for Trade Stuart Eizenstat, who is also the US special envoy for property claims in Central and Eastern Europe, with a book published in Warsaw in 1877 under the Hebrew title of 'Shero Olam'. The contents deal with much of the area which Eizenstat has traveled on his mission. (Ariel Jerolimski)

## Group demands legal action against parents of diphtheria victim

THE director of the National Council for the Child has demanded that the Health Ministry initiate action against the parents of a four-year-old haredi girl who died last week of diphtheria. The child was never vaccinated against the disease.

Dr. Yitzhak Kadman, in a letter to ministry director-general Dr. Meir Oren, said that current laws did not obligate parents to have their youngsters immunized against childhood diseases. However, laws "do require parents to protect the welfare and health of their children. Whoever jeopardizes them faces a prison sentence," Kadman said.

"Now, when parents intentionally refuse to get their children vaccinated and endanger their health and lives, is the time to enforce these laws," he said.

No comment on Kadman's letter was available from either Oren or ministry spokesman Effie Lahav yesterday.

The case involved the child of middle-aged American parents, who reportedly identify with Neturei Karta. The child was born in her

parents' home in Mea She'arim. She had not been registered with the municipal health authorities, was never taken to a family health center and was treated since babyhood with goat's milk by her mother, who believed in the power of "natural medicine."

She died on Shabbat at Hadassah-University Hospital in Ein Kerem - the first victim of diphtheria in Israel since a Bnei Brak boy died of the contagious disease in 1988. The law requiring parents to have their children immunized was abolished in 1980, when smallpox was no longer regarded as a threat.

Kadman said that although education is preferable to legislation, "when this doesn't succeed, there is no alternative but to punish violators. An example must be made of these parents," he said.

Family health centers, in most cases, have the names and addresses of families whose children are not immunized, thus they can be located, he added.

In a meeting on Monday with Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, Oren agreed that haredi families who refuse to take their children to municipal family health centers would be able to get vaccinations at Orthodox-sponsored medical-aid organizations, such as Yad Sarah, Ezra Le'Marpe and other groups. Oren said this would facilitate the ministry's aim of increasing the number of vaccinated children.

He did not say, however, how proper vaccination procedures would be supervised, Lau pledged to "use his influence" to increase the immunization rate in the haredi community. However, that the more extreme religious groups do not recognize the chief rabbis' rulings.

Various explanations have been given for the low vaccination rate in haredi communities. Some claim that extreme groups in the community are anti-Zionist and want nothing to do with the establishment. Others maintain that some rabbis advise against vaccination because they have heard of rare complications and that it "could be dangerous."

## Eizenstat: Probe will account for Jewish assets

HUNGARY, the Czech Republic and Estonia are the eastern European countries which have done the most to return stolen Holocaust-era assets to Jewish communities, US Under Secretary for Trade Stuart Eizenstat said at a media briefing in Jerusalem yesterday. He also noted that Poland, which has legislation pending, is the country "that has done the least."

Eizenstat also confirmed that Paul Volcker, former chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board, will head an independent commission to look into the assets of Holocaust victims which remain in Swiss banks.

Eizenstat, who is the US government's special envoy for property claims in Central and Eastern Europe, said he is optimistic that the independent commission, which is to investigate several issues, will be able to resolve many of the lingering uncertainties surrounding Holocaust era looted assets and unclaimed Jewish deposits in Swiss banks.

"We're very encouraged that at last we're going to have a full accounting," he said.

Prior to the briefing, Eizenstat,

accompanied by US Ambassador Martin Indyk, met with Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg and representatives of the World Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Restitution Organization to update them on restitution developments in Switzerland and Eastern Europe.

Over the past year, Eizenstat has travelled to 13 countries in connection with claims for properties confiscated or stolen from Jews by the Nazis and their sympathizers. He has yet to visit Russia.

In some countries, he said, much of the community property will generate income to help Jewish communities restore themselves. To see synagogues and minyanim reborn and kosher restaurants and Jewish community centers opened, he said, was inspirational.

"Anyone who ever gets jaded," he recommended, "ought to go to some of these eastern European countries and see these communities rebuilding their lives."

Eizenstat said he was particularly concerned about the needs of destitute Holocaust survivors who were trapped behind the Iron

Curtain after World War II and never received any restitution, emphasizing that "seven years after the fall of Communism, these people still get nothing."

Neither Burg nor Eizenstat could hazard a guess as to the total worth of unreturned Jewish assets. The worth per se is not what's important, Burg stressed.

"What we're talking about is a principle," he said. "We're not into the price business. What we want is that not one piece of property which belonged to a Jew will remain in non-Jewish hands."

While East European governments have by and large committed themselves to some form of restitution, claims by the WJRO and other bodies can at best be met on only a partial basis. Burg quoted a Polish official who had told him: "If we answer all your demands, it will come to at least 40 percent of the property in Poland."

The independent committee chaired by Volcker is scheduled to meet in New York on August 14, at which time criteria will be established for the manner in which applications can be made for unclaimed Jewish assets in Swiss banks, Burg said.

## Prison-break inquiry continues

THE committee investigating the escape of the two security prisoners from Ashmoret Prison on Sunday is expected to make recommendations about the conditions at all high-security prisons.

Islamic Jihad members Tawfik Zadan and Ghassan Awi escaped from Ashmoret by burrowing an 11-meter-long tunnel under their cell over a period of months.

The committee, formed by Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani, is now probing any possible security breaches at other

prisons.

The preliminary findings are most severe, Kahalani said yesterday. "The fact that they drilled loudly for days and even weeks unnoticed - or even unheard - is even more severe."

The two tunneled with a drilling hammer, a large and very noisy instrument, which had been used at the prison during renovations.

Kahalani also said he was

shocked that there were no nightly examinations by wardens in prisoners' cells.

The committee is expected to recommend regular searches and examinations, especially in the cells of security prisoners.

It is not yet known whether Prisons Service Commissioner Arye Bibi will be punished. After the escape he said that if the committee found him responsible in any way he would reach his own conclusions, even if it meant his resignation.

## Ministry: Police acted properly in J'lem shooting

THERE are no grounds for indicting the border policemen who shot an unarmed Arab hotel worker in Jerusalem two months ago, because the death resulted from the policemen's mistaken belief that the victim was a terrorist, the Justice Ministry's division for investigating policemen ruled this week.

The incident occurred at about 2:30 a.m. on June 6, while an undercover border police team was at work in the Wadi Kadoun neighborhood of Jerusalem. They parked their car near the Shweikeb house, and the three Shweikeb

brothers - all unarmed - came out to investigate. The family said later that their car had been broken into the night before, and when they saw what appeared to be a suspicious vehicle near their house, they were afraid the thieves had returned.

According to the policemen, however, one of the men made a motion as if he were pulling out a gun and, afraid the three were terrorists, they opened fire. Daoud Shweikeb was killed, and his brother Mohammed was injured.

After investigating the incident, the ministry's division for investigating policemen ruled that the border police were not to blame.

"What happened was a miserable and tragic combination of events, in which the victims thought they were facing car thieves, while the policemen thought they were facing terrorists," wrote division head Eran Shendrar. "Given the circumstances, I came to the conclusion that the policeman who fired was not guilty of any criminal

offense."

B'Tselem slammed the decision, charging that of 13 cases in which Arabs were killed by undercover Border Police units, the division has already closed 12. A decision has not yet been issued on the 13th, the organization said.

"B'Tselem believes that the message sent to the security services by the decision to close this case is that the hasty and irresponsible use of weapons against Palestinians... is not an unacceptable act for which they will be required to answer," the organization said in a press statement.

## Amir asks for his appeal to be reheard

YIGAL Amir yesterday asked the Supreme Court that an expanded panel of justices rehear his appeal against his conviction of murdering prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. The court had upheld Amir's conviction in a unanimous verdict issued Sunday.

In the request, attorney Gabi Shahar argued that it was not sufficiently proven that the bullets taken from Rabin's body were the same as those later identified by ballistics tests as having been fired from Amir's gun. This claim was also raised in the original appeal and was unanimously rejected by three justices.

Shahar also argued that the court had erred in ignoring a second set of ballistic tests showing that the bullets which killed Rabin had been fired from very close range, and in one case, with the gun actually touching his jacket. Amir's lawyers had charged during the original appeal that there was no evidence to show that Amir had ever got this close to Rabin, but the justices ruled that this argument became irrelevant once the bullets were proven to have come from Amir's gun. Evelyn Gordon

## Immigration down slightly

SOME 33,000 new immigrants arrived in Israel in the first half of 1996, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported this week. The figure is down 4.4 percent on the total for the second half of last year (34,500).

The number coming from the FSU is down 6.5% to 27,900. From the Americas and Oceania, 2,100 arrived - a 24% increase - with 1,700 coming from Europe, 900 from Africa and 450 from Asia.

Of the total immigration 19% were aged 14 or under, 68% were between 15 and 64, with 12% being 65 or over. David Harris

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# Rebels attack central Grozny

SEPARATIST rebels, led by the mastermind of a bloody hostage-taking raid last year, stormed into the Chechen capital Grozny yesterday and fought Russian forces in their biggest offensive in months.

The rebels, who shot down four helicopter gunships and killed and wounded scores of Russian servicemen, also attacked two other towns in coordinated attacks against the troops they regard as an occupying force.

A rebel leader said the raids were intended to force Moscow back to the negotiating table, but a senior Russian official described the rebel leaders as "international terrorists" and said talks could now be ruled out.

Hundreds of the rebels launched the dawn attack on the city center and seized several key points as Russian forces backed by jets and helicopter gunships tried to stop them.

Rebel commanders said the attack, the biggest by their forces since a peace agreement in May, was intended to upstage President Boris Yeltsin's inauguration in Moscow on Friday for a second term.

Heavy fighting raged as up to 400 heavily armed rebels launched two drives in to the

## News agencies GROZNY

Chechen capital, taking control of several main roads and intersections in the center, Russian military officials said.

Rebel forces were backed by several tanks and armored personnel carriers.

Russian fighter jets and helicopter gunships bombed areas held by the Chechens and frequent explosions shook the shattered city center. Helicopter gunships fired hundreds of rockets at buildings where rebel fighters were sheltering.

The main fighting was near government buildings in the city center and around the railway station. Rebel snipers kept main streets under constant fire.

The rebels claimed their forces had shot down two Russian helicopters, but there was no way to confirm the report. The Interfax news agency reported that one Russian helicopter had been damaged.

Rebel forces also attacked government buildings yesterday in the towns of Argun and Gudermes.

Deputy Interior Minister Pavel Golubyets said 13 Russian servicemen had been killed and 45

wounded.

Many of the rebel attacks appeared aimed at facilities of the Moscow-backed Chechen government, which complained that Russian troops were slow to intervene.

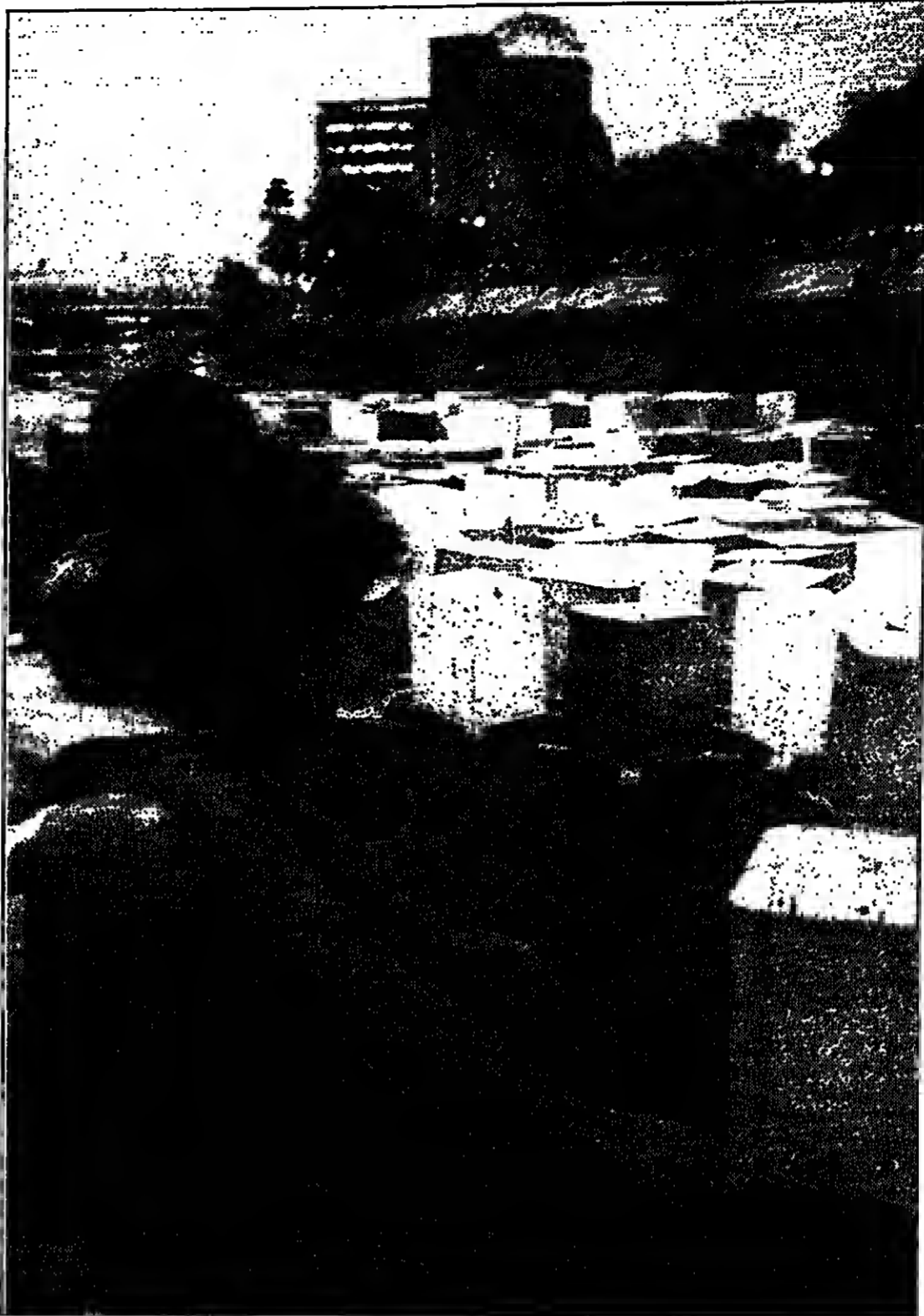
Ahmed Zakayev, a Chechen rebel representative to peace talks, said rebel leaders had told him the attack was organized by extremists who oppose a peaceful settlement. He said peace efforts would continue.

Top Russian negotiators arrived in Chechnya last week to discuss ways to end the hostilities, but so far have failed to contact rebel leaders.

Peace agreements calling for a cease-fire, troop withdrawal and rebel disarmament were signed between Moscow and the rebels in May and June, but have remained little more than paper.

Attempts to renew talks have failed, especially since Russian forces launched an offensive after Yeltsin's re-election July 3. The two sides have blamed each other for the breakdown.

Yeltsin and his prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, discussed the situation in Chechnya during a meeting yesterday. It was Yeltsin's first day back at work at the Kremlin since he left on July 15.



Children float paper lanterns in Hiroshima's Motoyasu River to commemorate the 51st anniversary of the bombing of the city. In the background is the symbolic skeleton A-bomb dome. (Reuters)

# Japan remembers Hiroshima

HIROSHIMA (Reuters) - Japan marked the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing yesterday with prayers for the victims of the world's first nuclear attack 51 years ago and fresh vows to fight the spread of atomic weaponry.

In what has become a yearly ritual, citizens of Hiroshima and survivors of the nuclear blast joined a ceremony commemorating the exact moment when the bomb was dropped on the morning of August 6, 1945.

After dark, Hiroshima citizens floated some 10,000 paper lanterns down rivers running through the city to console the souls of those who died.

Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto told the gathering he would keep pushing for the adoption of a global treaty banning nuclear tests.

"Our current priority is to seek

early agreement on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)," Hashimoto said. "I will make utmost efforts as the prime minister of the only nation that experienced the atomic bomb," he said.

More than 50,000 residents and bomb survivors gathered for the service in Hiroshima, in southern Japan, 10,000 fewer than those attended the 50th anniversary commemoration last year.

City officials said that half a century after the world's first use of atomic weaponry reduced Hiroshima to ruins and left a legacy of radiation-linked disease, citizens were less inclined to dwell on the past.

"The mood here is that Hiroshima is turning away from the past to the future," said Noriko Nakamura, spokeswoman for the southwestern city.

"Humanity and nuclear arms cannot co-exist," declared Hiroshima Mayor Takashi Hiraoka.

"We hope the nuclear experiments which have been conducted over 2,000 times will be ended with the agreement of the CTBT," Hiraoka said in his peace declaration.

In Geneva, UN-sponsored talks bringing together 61 nations are trying to complete the CTBT text by consensus before it is sent to UN headquarters in New York, where it will be opened for signature in September.

In the past year, Hiroshima has expressed indignation against France and China for conducting nuclear tests when the international community was working to ban them, the latest Chinese test coming only about a week before the anniversary.

# Rivals reach accord on Mostar

MOSTAR (Reuters) - Bosnian Muslims and Croats agreed yesterday to form a local government in the city of Mostar, averting a major crisis in the Bosnian peace process and paving the way for countrywide elections in September.

Dragan Gasic, a spokesman for the European Union which sponsored the talks, said details of the accord based on recent local election results, would be released later in the day.

It was struck after three days of grueling negotiations marked by frequent adjournments and late night sessions and well past a EU deadline for agreement.

The EU, which supervised the local elections as part of a mandate to administer Mostar, had threatened to pull out unless the two sides, deeply mistrustful and embittered after a 10-month war, reached an agreement.

EU officials had set an August 4 deadline but later backed away from carrying out their threat.

An explosion overnight in Croat-held western Mostar underscored rising tensions between the two communities.

A car was damaged and windows in nearby flats were shattered after an explosive device detonated in a garage at about 11.30 p.m., EU police spokesman Howard Fox said.

No serious injuries were reported and the incident was under investigation.

Despite the frequent delays EU mediators had remained hopeful the Mostar Croats could be persuaded to lift their boycott of a newly-elected city council.

"What is separating us is half a sentence," EU spokesman Dragan Gasic had said earlier. "One side, the Muslims, have signed. Maybe in the next few hours the Croats will sign as well. But for the moment they have told us they would not."

US trouble-shooting envoy for Bosnia Ambassador John Kolumba earlier told CNN he believed a deal was close.

"They are now pretty near there... a half a sentence apart. They are now finding some language they can agree to," he said.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel told German Radio yesterday: "Too much is at stake - the federation, the elections on September 14 and in the end the success of the Dayton peace process."

The two factions fought a bitter 10-month war in 1993-94, while the main Muslim-Serb conflict raged in Bosnia. Some of the worst fighting occurred in Mostar.

Diplomats fear failure to implement the results of the Mostar poll could derail nationwide elections planned for next month and make a mockery of international attempts to overcome hatreds between the main Muslim and Serb communities.

# Dole looks for boost in California

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - Presumed presidential nominee Bob Dole will be looking to the Republican Party's national convention in San Diego next week to revive his fortunes in vote-rich California.

California accounts for 54 electoral college votes in the presidential race, more than any other state and 20 percent of the total needed to capture the White House.

But a Los Angeles Times poll last month showed Dole lagging behind President Bill Clinton in California by 27 percentage points, an even bigger deficit than in the national polls, which show Clinton with a lead of up to 20 points.

The fact the Republican National Convention is being held in California will give the former Senate majority leader an opportunity "to get back in the game out here," Dan Schnur, a political analyst and former aide to California's Republican Governor Pete Wilson, said.

"Bob Dole will get more media attention that week (in California) than at any other point in the campaign. This is his chance to sell Californians on a message they haven't had the chance to hear," he said.

If Dole's message resonates with Californians, then "the state is back in play," Schnur said. But if Dole fails to win over California voters, his campaign could at some point think about focusing its efforts in other states.

"At a certain point, you have to decide where to deploy your resources," he said.

Whether the convention lifts Dole's fortunes in California depends on what image he conveys there, political analysts say. A divisive convention, marked by bitter infighting over issues such as abortion, could hurt his chances, they say.

Dole also hopes for a boost from his plan to cut taxes by more than \$500 billion over six years, with a 15 percent reduction in income tax rates over three years.

As Dole's message of tax cuts, more opportunities, smaller government and stronger, safer families begins to have an impact, "you will see the numbers increase in the polls," Dole campaign spokeswoman Christina Martin said from Washington, adding that Dole "intends to fight hard for California."

After the convention, the cash-strapped Dole campaign will receive a boost from \$74 million in public campaign funds.

Conventional political wisdom holds that Clinton must take California to win re-election, while Dole could conceivably win enough other states to carry him to the White House without winning in California.

"We are the foundation of Bill Clinton's electoral equation. We are it for Clinton. Clinton cannot win without California, but it's also very difficult for a Republican to win without contesting California," said Sherry Bebitch Jeffe, a political analyst at California's Claremont Graduate School.

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# Cash pours in to stop twin abortion

LONDON (AP) - Offers to a 16-week pregnant woman to stop her aborting one twin because she is poor have soared to more than 45,000 pounds (NIS 254,000) - stirring a national controversy over Britain's liberal abortion laws.

The leader of a pro-abortion doctors' group denounced what she called the "auctioning" of the healthy fetus, and accused anti-abortion groups of using the case to whip up support.

Authorities at Queen Charlotte Hospital in west London said they could not tell the patient, described by the hospital as a 28-year-old single mother who already has one child, about the money offers because it would break patients' confidentiality. It was unclear how the woman could not know of the offers anyway.

Abortion is available virtually on demand in Britain. But this case is highly unusual because it involves aborting a healthy fetus in a naturally conceived multiple pregnancy.

# Forced labor ups Burma GDP, says US

BANGKOK (AP) - Forced labor accounts for approximately 3 percent of Burma's gross domestic product, according to an economic report by the US Embassy in Rangoon.

The annual report, received in Bangkok yesterday, paints a bleak picture of the economy, with soaring deficits, declining foreign investment, rampant military spending and rising debt and reliance on illicit drug profits.

"The state has employed growing amounts of unpaid labor, apparently worth about 3 percent of GDP in fiscal year 94/95," to build infrastructure, the report said.

Burma has been criticized by human rights groups and international labor organizations for using forced labor on public works. The

government says citizens willingly working without pay is Burmese tradition.

Journalists and other outsiders who have interviewed workers dispute the government's claim, describing how people are rounded up to work for little or no pay. Those unable to work are sometimes fined.

The United Nations International Labor Organization in May agreed to launch a rare grievance procedure against Burma. The US State Department human rights report this year said hundreds of thousands of Burmese are forced into work.

A US Embassy spokesman said some of the numbers were "educated guesses" because the government's figures were either incomplete or distorted.

# Vigilante drug violence in S.Africa

CAPE TOWN (AP) - The leader of a vigilante group that gunned down a drug lord was wounded and in hiding yesterday, but determined to continue his campaign against gangs.

"The bloodletting was actually very helpful," Muhammad Ali "Phantom" Parker told the Cape Times from his hideout. "In my mind it strengthens our cause. The war will be intensified."

Parker was shot in the chest Sunday night when he led about 200 people in a protest outside a house owned by the twin leaders of the notorious Hard Living Kids, Rashied and Rashad Staggie.

Shots were fired on the protesters from the house, and the crowd was angry by the time Rashad Staggie drove up. Masked members of Parker's People Against Gangsterism and Drugs shot Staggie repeatedly and set him alight with a petrol bomb, killing him.

People Against Gangsterism and Drugs, or P.A.G.A.D., had held

demonstrations in recent weeks in which they arrived at the homes of suspected drug dealers shouting threats and in one instance setting fire to a van. The group is linked to the Gatesville mosque, whose conservative clerics have called for a tough stand on crime.

At his brother's funeral Monday, Rashied Staggie dared any Moslem to try and kill him. With about 3,000 followers, Staggie commands Cape Town's second largest gang, and police fear war will break out between Pagad members and young criminals.

Scores of gangs deal in drugs, prostitution and stolen goods in Cape Town's impoverished, largely Moslem neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, robbers grabbed 40 million rand (about NIS 30m.) from the offices of a Durban security firm early yesterday in "what we believe to be the biggest ever armed robbery in South Africa," said police spokesman Vishnu

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# US-Iran tension poses dilemma for Gulf Arabs

**M**OUNTING tension between the US and Iran poses an alarming dilemma for Gulf Arab states, who are dependent on Washington for protection while also having to nervously watch their larger neighbor across the water.

The oil-rich but vulnerable Gulf Arabs, who have looked to the US to defend them since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, have publicly accused Teheran of interfering in their internal affairs.

The US has up to 20,000 soldiers and marines stationed in the Gulf and has vowed to shield its Arab allies there from any possible Iranian threat.

Some analysts and Western diplomats said that while Gulf Arab states saw US protection as vital, they also feared having to pay a heavy price for any military showdown between Washington and Teheran.

"The Gulf states are nervous about a US-Iranian confrontation," a Western diplomat said.

"They are in a no-win situation. Nobody can afford to provoke Iran in the Gulf. The Gulf states have too much to lose. Iran can turn around and say 'You helped the Americans' and carry out acts of sabotage," the diplomat said.

US Defense Secretary William Perry last week made fresh allegations about Iranian support of "international terrorism" and said Washington would take strong action against any country proved to be involved in the fuel truck

bombing in Saudi Arabia which killed 19 American airmen.

He called Iran the prime suspect in international terrorism against the US but denied this signaled imminent military action against Teheran. Iran denied the US charges and complained to the United Nations about American threats.

"The Americans want to settle past accounts with Iran but they neglect the fact that we will always be Iran's neighbors," a Saudi analyst said.

"A confrontation would mean we would be accused of aiding the United States. America and Israel will not suffer but we will. We don't want problems with Iran. Easing tensions would be the best solution," the analyst added.

Elsewhere in the Gulf, tough military action was urged against Iran or any other foreign power if they were linked to the June 25 Saudi bombing.

"Stroog and swift military action should be taken if Iran, any other foreign power, or whoever, is implicated in the bombing in Saudi Arabia," a Gulf official said.

"Gulf states and their Western allies should take action. We should teach them a lesson not to do this again," the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, added.

Iran, the dominant regional power, has tried to improve ties with its Gulf Arab neighbors and has criticized the US military presence in the region. (Reuters)

# Arafat turns deaf ear to due process

**R**ESPECT for human rights is a simple issue that Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat still fails to understand. The events in Nablus and Tulkarm last weekend point to this, and brought the new Palestinian administration its most serious challenge.

The Legislative Council has published clear demands for Arafat to set up a normal democratic judiciary and for prisoners to be taken before proper courts or released after a legally stipulated time of investigation. It has been demanded of Arafat that PA prisoners be given due process - a proper trial with either acquittal or appropriate sentence.

Such demands seem alien to Arafat, who simply ignores them. This issue has been a major bone of contention between Arafat and the newly elected Legislative Council in the territories.

Even Yasser Abd Rabbo, head of the FIDA party in Nablus and close colleague of Arafat, has never hesitated to demand that Arafat respect human rights and eliminate creeping

## BACKGROUND PINHAS INBARI

corruption in the Palestinian regime.

When the young Fatah leader Mahmoud Jumayal was tortured and killed during interrogations in the Nablus prison last week, the city exploded in anger. Some 30,000 people attended the funeral which became a mass protest. They stormed the municipality, the police station and the private homes of senior PA figures.

On Friday, a quiet demonstration of prisoners' families near the PA headquarters in Tulkarm turned to chaos after crowds attending weekly prayers joined them, inflamed by sermons from Hamas preachers in the mosques.

The police opened fire, the crowd stormed the prison to free more than 50 inmates. One Palestinian was shot dead and Tulkarm was placed under curfew for the first time in the West Bank autonomy.

No one in Nablus had even demanded that Jumayal be freed - he was a member of a group that had terrorized the city before the PA authorities entered.

These events brought Arafat the first big threat to his rule.

M.S., a young FIDA activist, explained how ordinary Palestinians see the matter: "I was proud to go 10 times to Israeli jails during the intifada. I refuse to enter a Palestinian jail even for half a minute."

"There are gaps in the mentality of those who came from Tunis compared with us in the West Bank. We have the intifada mentality - we are sensitized to human rights. They are not. They even forget they are only here thanks to our struggle."

"Israel is looking happily at what is going on among us," he said. "That is a mistake, because sooner or later such internal

Palestinian violence will turn against the settlements. On the settlements issue we will be united."

Israeli security officials concur, saying they believe the party gaining most is Hamas.

Hamas was firmly behind the Tulkarm agitation and Hamas will benefit if such instability worsens.

"Rule by Arafat is the only solution in the current situation," one security source said. "No good will come out of having his leadership weak."

The Palestinian leadership of Nablus reached a similar conclusion. A delegation representing Nablus went to see Arafat in Jericho. While assuring him of their support and loyalty, they again pleaded with him to establish proper state institutions, especially legal ones.

"Give prisoners a proper chance," the delegates urged. "Do not repeat the evils of the Israeli occupation."

Arafat nodded his approval. No one was sure if he understood the message.

## Terry Anderson returns to Beirut

**T**ERRY Anderson, the US journalist who was kidnapped in Beirut and held hostage for nearly seven years, arrived this week to film a documentary about Lebanon's recovery from its civil war.

Anderson was making his first trip back since his release on December 4, 1991, a year after the 15-year sectarian strife ended and the government began disbanding unruly militias that had eroded its authority during the conflict.

"I am happy and excited to be back," Anderson said. "I don't think there will be risks that can't be managed. The war is over."

Asked whether he had notified the US State Department of his trip, he said: "No. I don't believe the American ban against Lebanon is legal."

Almost five years after Anderson became the last American hostage to be freed from captivity in Lebanon, Washington still maintains a ban on the travel of its citizens there.

Anderson said the documentary he has in mind would focus on "how far Lebanon has gone in its recovery from the war."

"The Americans know only about the violent side of Lebanon. I want to tell them about how Lebanon is doing in peacetime," Anderson said.

His Lebanese wife, Madeleine Bassil Anderson, and their daughter 11-year-old, Sulome, were on hand to meet him as he emerged from the arrivals' terminal at Beirut airport. They had come to Beirut earlier to prepare for his visit.

"I am not scared about his return," Madeleine Anderson said.

Anderson, now 48, was Beirut bureau chief of the AP when he was kidnapped by the Islamic Jihad, on March 16, 1985. His daughter was born less than three months after his kidnapping.

His 2,455-day ordeal made him the longest-held of 92 foreigners who were abducted during the Lebanese strife.

Most of the hostages were freed in deals negotiated by their governments or through UN intermediaries. Eleven, however, are believed to have been killed by their captors or died in captivity.

During his two-week stay, Anderson will film a documentary for CNN and interview a host of officials, politicians and religious leaders. But the 42-minute documentary will not touch on his personal ordeal in captivity. (AP)



Syrian Olympic gold medalist Ghada Shouaa holds her medal while riding in a motorcade through Damascus Monday. Shouaa, who won the heptathlon, is the country's first gold medal winner. (Reuters)

## Egyptian court: Academic must divorce

**A**N Egyptian court this week threw its weight behind Islamists by upholding a ruling that a happily married university professor must divorce his wife because his writings make him unfit to be married to a Moslem woman.

He was found to have renounced Islam. The decision in the case of Nasr Abu Zeid drew immediate criticism from human rights activists and secular lawyers, who fear the decision will embolden Moslem fundamentalists to go after others who do not share their view of Islam.

"It is all the more dangerous because it gives regressive forces the opportunity to challenge others' personal, academic, scientific and religious beliefs in court," said a statement issued by the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR). The group said it feared for the life of Abu Zeid and urged President Hosni Mubarak to overturn the "unjust" decision.

The court rejected Abu Zeid's appeal against a ruling ordering his separation from fellow academic Ibtihal Younis.

Moslem fundamentalists won their court case against Abu Zeid last year when a judge supported their claim that his writing had made him an unbeliever.

Mohammed Moneib, secretary general of the EOHR, said the court decision was a damaging blow to Egypt.

"This is a big shock to us. The ruling is a strike in the face of civil society in Egypt and to its development. It is another addition to the backward behavior in Egypt that is working to stop any real

development and it strengthens the limitations on freedom of opinion and belief," Moneib said.

"We urge the president to intervene immediately and cancel this unjust ruling," he added.

Court sources said they had expected judge Mohammed Misbah Sbarabiya to postpone his decision on the appeal until Abu Zeid's lawyers had had a chance to include details of new legislation passed by parliament earlier this year that affects their case.

According to the legislation, any cases calling for the separation of a husband and wife must be investigated before they go to court if the plaintiff is not directly involved.

Abu Zeid and Younis moved to the Netherlands earlier this year to take up teaching posts. The court that made the decision is the last stop for appeals in Egypt and court sources say if the couple ever return to Cairo they will have to separate.

Human rights groups have expressed concern for Abu Zeid's life, saying they fear that Moslem militant groups fighting to turn Egypt into a strict Islamic state will take the ruling against Abu Zeid as a license to kill him.

The Egyptian militant Jihad group said last year that Abu Zeid should be killed in line with Islamic laws because he had abandoned his Moslem faith.

"Abu Zeid's life is in real danger now. There is no way he or his wife can return [to Egypt] because they [militants] are waiting to kill them immediately and they have a legal justification - this unjust ruling," EOHR's Moneib said. (News agencies)

## Germans stumble on Palestinian hijack plotters

### ERIK KIRSCHBAUM BERLIN

**W**HEN German police accidentally stumbled on the two Palestinian accomplices of a hijacker who seized a Spanish plane and forced it to land in Miami recently, they at first had no idea that the two were guilty of anything more than illegal entry into Germany.

The Iberia Airlines DC-10 bound for Havana was diverted in mid-flight to Miami on July 26 after a lone hijacker, initially believed to be Lebanese, held a pair of scissors to a flight attendant's neck and said he had a bomb ready to blow up the plane.

The hijacker surrendered peacefully after the plane landed in Miami and one of the 231 passengers or crew were hurt.

This week the hijacker was identified by a Lebanese security source as Sa'ado Mubammad Ibrahim, a Palestinian born in Ein el-Fitweh refugee camp in 1968. "He left Lebanon with a laissez-passer, number 088415," the security source said.

The hijack took place nine days after the explosion of TWA Flight 800 but because it happened only hours before the Olympics bomb in Atlanta, occurs about the incident was all but lost in the vast coverage of the Atlanta bomb.

But the hijack story took a bizarre turn last week when German prosecutors in the border town of Saarbruecken said that two Palestinian men had been detained during a routine passport check.

They were crossing from France to Germany without valid visas. When questioned, they unexpectedly revealed that they had played a role in planning the Spanish hijack. They said they had opted out at the last minute as passengers boarded in Madrid.

"We did not know there had been accomplices to the hijacking until the accomplices themselves told us while being questioned about their illegal entry into Germany," said Weddel Wintrich, deputy state prosecutor in Saarbruecken, a small city of 200,000 people on Germany's southeastern border with France.

"The theory of their involvement is based entirely on their own claims of having participated," Wintrich said.

"They were only being questioned about entering the country without a visa."

The men's names have not been released. One had a Lebanese passport, the other Wintrich described as a "stateless Palestinian." They were traveling by train from Paris to Frankfurt and were caught in a random check by border guards.

The two, aged 24 and 26 according to Wintrich, are being held without bail while police continue their investigation.

Neither Spain nor the US have yet asked for extradition, Wintrich said. A US Embassy spokesman in Berlin said he had no knowledge of any hijack accomplices being wanted in the US.

"We don't know anything about this," the spokesman said. "We are looking into it."

State prosecutors said the two have filed an appeal against their arrest in a German court. They are expected to be charged this week with helping to plan air piracy.

If convicted they could receive between two and 15 years in jail. They can be held for up to six months before being charged.

Neither Saarbruecken prosecutors, local police or the US

embassy have yet established why the two were trying to enter Germany. But Germany's reputation as a liberal haven for political refugees is well-known. In Frankfurt, where they were bound, more than a third of the population of 660,000 hold foreign passports.

The arrest of the alleged hijackers caused a considerable stir in sleepy Saarbruecken, recalling the capture in Germany of hijacker Mohammed Ali Hamadi in 1987, who was caught by border guards after he landed at Frankfurt's international airport. Hamadi was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for the 1985 hijacking of a TWA airliner to Beirut, during which a US Navy diver was executed.

Hamadi spent some of his prison time in Saarbruecken and is now in a jail near Frankfurt where he will not be eligible for parole until 2002. German law forbade Hamadi's extradition to the US since he could have faced a death penalty there if convicted. (Special to The Jerusalem Post)

## Ex-Iraqi official: Saddam planned to invade Saudi Arabia

**A** former Iraqi official said yesterday President Saddam Hussein was planning to invade Saudi Arabia soon after his army took over Kuwait in August 1990.

Saad al-Bazzaz made the disclosure in a new book and said by telephone from exile in Jordan that Saddam decided to invade Saudi Arabia after he saw attempts to neutralize King Fahd in the Kuwait crisis had failed.

Saddam has always denied he planned such a move and maintained the US falsely accused him of an invasion plan to scare the Saudis into accepting US and other allied forces which later liberated Kuwait.

Excerpts from al-Bazzaz's yet to be published book, *Generals Are the Last to Know*, were printed this week in the London-based daily *Al-Hayat*. It said Saddam ordered his forces to ready an assault on Saudi Arabia's oil-rich eastern provinces.

Al-Bazzaz, an ex-aide to Saddam and former editor of the government daily *Al-Jawhouriya*, said the Iraqi leader ordered the elite Republican Guard to be ready to launch an offensive on August 11, 1990, nine days after the invasion of Kuwait.

According to the plans, four

divisions, totalling 120,000 troops, were to thrust into the desert to capture the oil fields more than 300 km away.

The plans worked out by commander of the guards at the time, Lt. Gen. Iyad Feteyeb al-Rawi, called for a three-pronged attack that would have the attackers reach the oil fields in 10 hours, said al-Bazzaz.

"Everything was set [for the Saudi invasion] awaiting an H-hour to be decided by the commander in chief," al-Bazzaz said, referring to Saddam.

Later, al-Bazzaz said, Saddam canceled the Saudi invasion plans and ordered troops to concentrate instead on fortifying Kuwait.

"No one can determine what forced him to change his mind," he said. "This is a secret which only Saddam knows."

Saddam again planned an invasion during the war when Iraqi troops captured the Saudi border town of Khafji, al-Bazzaz said.

He said Saddam ordered his commanders to try to capture thousands of American troops and tie them to Iraqi tanks that would advance into the Saudi oil fields. But US-led allied forces soon drove the Iraqis out of Khafji. (AP)

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## Peace at home

THE squabbling over whether Shas or the National Religious Party should first hold the Religious Affairs portfolio is thankfully over, but not before reducing the unfortunate brew of religion and politics to the level of parody. In the end, the decision to give the minister's job first to Shas's Eli Suissa and then, in a year's time, to the NRP's Zevulun Hammer, was not settled, as Shas had suggested, by randomly opening a Bible and seeing which party's initial letter appeared first on the page. Perhaps we missed the opportunity for God to display a sense of humor and ensure that neither letter appear on the chosen page.

The real travesty, however, is that this tussle has served to reinforce the feeling that religious parties are more concerned with spoils than with souls. In his first speech as prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu said that "the first and foremost peace we must make is peace at home, amongst ourselves." Unity among the Jewish people is not only Israel's greatest long-term challenge, it is arguably critical to our security and to a successful outcome in the peace process. Yet repairing the serious tear between religious and secular camps, as highlighted this summer on Rehov Bar-Ilan, hardly seems to be on the agenda of the religious parties.

Indeed, this oxymoron - the "religious party" - is ill-equipped to contribute to the healing process. It is the image, after all, of the religious parties hip-deep in the muck of politics year after year that has done so much to sour secular Israelis on religion and the religious camp.

Despite this, in the last elections a remarkable number of secular Israelis voted for the religious parties (particularly Shas and the NRP) because of their distaste for the anti-religious campaign conducted by Meretz. The majority of Israelis are clearly against both the radical secular and religious visions of the state. They believe Israel can be both a Jewish and a democratic state, as Israel's declaration of independence proclaimed almost 50 years ago.

By engaging in an aggressively anti-religious campaign, Meretz not only lost three seats, it also lost the war among the wider Israeli public. The religious parties seem to be making a simi-

lar mistake. They can continue their historic focus on laws relating to religious observance, but the more they fight these battles the more they risk losing the larger war, as they alienate the majority who want a Jewish state but are against Judaism imposed by the state.

While the goal of the religious parties has no doubt been to elevate politics, it is hard to escape the assessment that politics has instead succeeded in lowering religion. Whether it is fair or not, the religious parties, and the extremists who are small minorities within the religious communities, represent Judaism in the eyes of many secular Israelis. While it is very difficult for religious politicians to change this impression from inside the political system, it is the most important challenge the religious parties face - both for the good of the country and their own political future.

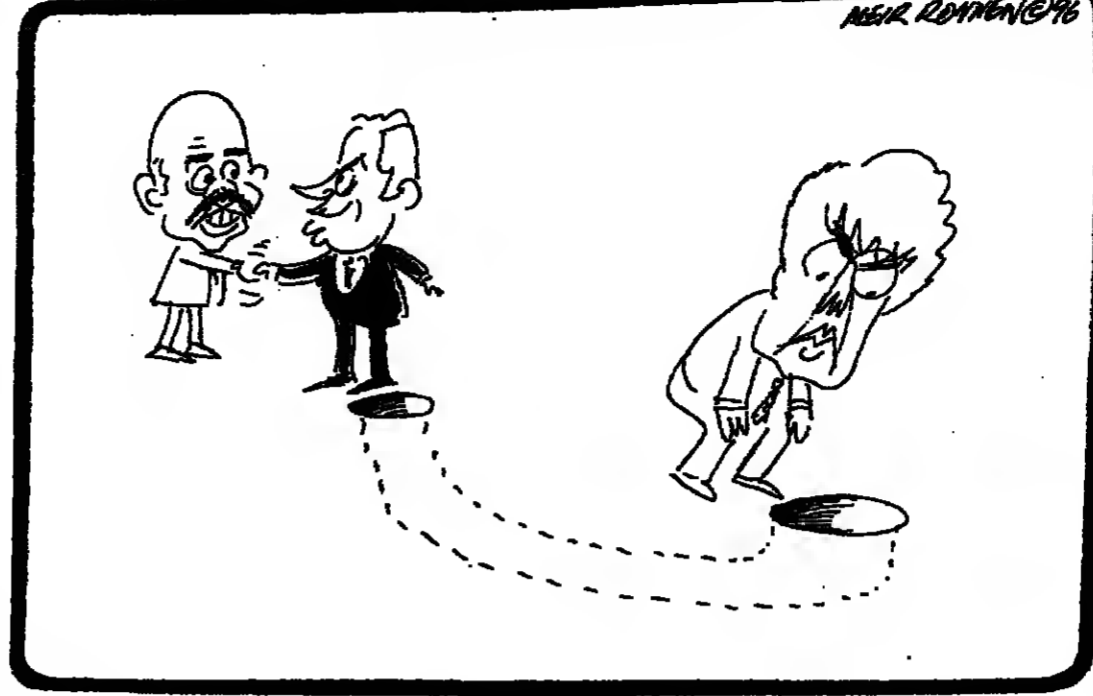
Fortunately, the challenge of repairing the image of religion and religious parties is not a zero-sum game - there are things that can be done that will improve relations with the secular majority without conflicting with the interests of the religious public.

Special attention can be paid to improving the points of contact between religious authorities and the general public. A wedding ceremony can be the first and most important religious event in the lives of Israeli adults - yet the contact with the religious authorities leading up to this tender moment tends to reinforce every stereotype of religious officialdom as being gratuitously coercive, mindlessly bureaucratic, and spiritually empty.

The religious court system, another point of contact with the secular public, is notoriously slow and inefficient. Here, too, is an opportunity to display the sophistication, subtlety, and moral sense of the Jewish legal system - an opportunity lost in a morass of bureaucracy.

The Religious Affairs Ministry should seek out and support the myriad of organizations, large and small, that are dedicated to improving relations between secular and religious Jews. While we should not expect the government to be the sole agent in healing this rift in our society, there is much that can be done. The least we can expect is that the Religious Affairs Ministry become part of the solution, rather than contributing to the problem.

## The great escape



## Signals from Tulkarm

MOSHE ZAK

THIS week's and-Palestinian police rioting in Nablus and Tulkarm and the violent protests against the Palestinian Authority's reign of terror in the areas under its rule present Israel with a dilemma: Should it rush to shore up Arafat's shaky regime? We've already helped Arafat out. Back at the beginning of the year we came up with a solution to the problem of Arabs resident in Jerusalem - sovereign Israeli territory - participating in elections to the PA. The government agreed that Palestinians living in the capital could be elected to the PA council, on condition that they had a second address outside Jerusalem.

This creative solution solved a very thorny problem for Arafat, but it is currently giving our premier quite a headache in the shape of PA council member Khatem Abdel Khader.

Last week Khader opened an office in his home in the Jerusalem suburb of Beit Hanina, in contravention of the Oslo agreement. On receiving a closure order from the Israeli authorities he claimed it was his sole residence - in other words, he admitted having falsely declared that he had another address outside Jerusalem, enabling himself on this basis to be elected to the PA.

In the atmosphere of mounting opposition now manifest within the PA council the rebellious Khader rejected Arafat's proposal that he close down his office so as not to rock the boat over Hebron.

This isn't the only case where Israel has woven itself a tangled web out of a wish to help Arafat. Its desire to provide the PA with economic aid caused a disagreement with the Jordanian government last year. When Israel promised Jordan that it would permit \$30m. of surplus Jordanian exports a year into Judea and Samaria, the Palestinian chambers

of commerce blocked implementation of the agreement.

And later when Israel signed an economic agreement with the PA providing for a free trade zone, there were problems with Jordan.

This week the prime minister himself was involved in papering over the cracks between our agreements with Jordan and the PA.

support for Arafat's regime. We saw an expression of this in the demonstrations this week.

Growing hatred for the PA heads could end up causing problems for their Israeli partners.

Israel has neither the right nor the ability to change the practices of the Palestinian administration. It shouldn't hurry to give the PA advice or get involved in any future crisis the regime may face.

PA leaders have been urged to "make haste slowly" (recalling Chaim Weizmann's use of the seemingly contradictory "hot frost"), but they don't seem to understand what that means.

Their security service lacks all restraint or inhibition. For example, from time to time it attempts to justify its use of torture in interrogations by citing the necessity of combating terrorism, as Israel and the US demand.

This PA lack of understanding of how much force to use in curbing terrorism is the backdrop to the violent demonstrations in Nablus and Tulkarm. It forms the background of the current ferment among Palestinians against Arafat's regime - a situation which is causing concern to view Israelis who have come to view Arafat as the keystone of their policies. But perhaps they should be less anxious.

Three decades ago Washington was concerned that the fall of Gamal Abdel Nasser would usher in a more extreme Egyptian ruler. Israel disagreed. And, in time, Anwar Sadat signed a peace treaty with Israel.

The same principle holds true regarding the Palestinians. Israel's long-term policy planning should not presuppose the permanence in power of any one individual, no matter how crucial he may seem at a particular time.

## Arafat's future looks shaky just now. Need Israel worry about it?

NETANYAHU'S government is continuing the policy of the previous one on economic aid for Arafat. Indirectly it has helped the PA get \$75m. in American aid - a kind of quid pro quo for Arafat's help in locating the body of soldier Ilan Sa'adon, murdered by Hamas terrorists. It was also something of a mark of appreciation of Palestinian police operations against terror gangs planning attacks in Israel.

But economic cooperation with the PA, welcome in itself, has a dangerous side: It entails links between Israelis no longer in office and senior Palestinians who occupy key roles in Gaza and Ramallah.

These Palestinians have come under harsh criticism from their own people. They have been accused of corruption and of accepting bribes involving import-export deals with Israelis.

And jealousy over their success is only liable to increase the ferment in Palestinian society against PA leaders, something which could further erode popular

## Numbers game

JACOB CHINITZ

I'M always annoyed - and amused - when I hear references to "the 613 commandments."

Serving as slogan and banner, the phrase is used by the left to show the sheer impossibility of assuming the burden of a religious life. The right, for its part, employs it to exemplify the blessings of that life.

In fact, however, the phrase carries no legitimate summation of what halachic Judaism is, or demands.

It would be ridiculous, by analogy, to speak of the duties of an Israeli citizen in terms of 60 Basic Laws, hundreds of laws passed by the Knesset, or the thousands of laws on the books of the various municipalities.

On the one hand it would be assumed that the average citizen never gets involved with most of Israel's laws; on the other it would be assumed that a citizen pledges loyalty to the whole corpus of Israeli law without any specific number being mentioned.

What are the facts about the 613 mitzvot?

If we were to refer to the Torah as the Constitution of the Jewish religion and the Talmud plus the total area of what is called the Oral Law as the legal system flowing from it, that would be like speaking of the US Constitution and the English Common Law preceding it and following it as being the legal system upon which the US, England, and in part, Israel base themselves.

But no one ever bothered to count the number of specific positive and negative laws in the US Constitution or the number of Basic Laws passed by the Knesset, which serve as a loose parallel to a national Constitution as yet unborn.

There is a passage in the Talmud which relates that Moses was given 613 (*aryag*) mitzvot at Sinai, and a great Jewish legal literature known as the *Minei Hamitzvot* grew up around this kernel idea. The "counters of the mitzvot" tried to pinpoint the 613 commandments from the text of the Torah, according to talmudic

## Why 613 commandments? You might just as well say millions

interpretation.

But the use of the number 613 leads to many fallacies from the viewpoint of Halacha itself.

NOT ALL the 613 commandments apply at all times, to all Jews, in all periods of history.

For example, there are mitzvot that apply to men and not to women - and vice versa, in the Temple and not outside it, to the Land of Israel and not the Diaspora, to the nation as a whole and not the individual, to priests (*kohanim*) only, at certain times and not at other times, once in a lifetime, and once a day.

At the end of his section on positive commandments in his *Book of Commandments* (*Sefer Hamitzvot*) Maimonides calculates that the average Jew living a normal married life in a community is subject to a total of 60 commandments on a regular basis.

The 613 commandments, while serving in a considerable sense as the scaffolding upon which a large part of Halacha can be hung, do not cover areas even of Torah law not included within their rubric; and they certainly do not include the vast area of rabbinic legislation.

So anyone wanting to boast about the rich possibilities inherent in religious observance could cite "millions" instead of 613 mitzvot. So, equally, could anyone wishing to point to the impossible burden of being observant.

The number 613 includes commandments not even the most ultra-Orthodox Jew would dream of carrying out today, such as *Sarah* and *Egla Arufa*, the suspected wife and the decapitated calf (in the case of an unsolved murder). These even the Mishna itself deemed obsolete 2,000 years ago.

On the other hand the 613 commandments include mitzvot that even the most secular Jew would accept as morally valid and even legally operative. Examples are "You shall not commit murder," and "You shall not steal."

Slogans serve a purpose in social controversy, but they can be dangerously misleading.

Banding about the phrase "613 commandments" outside rigorous yeshiva discussion or scholarly research into Hebrew Law can only distort the truth about religious observance and religious denial.

The writer is an Orthodox rabbi.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PORNOGRAPHY

Sir, - After viewing the show *Yoman Tarbut* with Yael Dan on July 18, it is obvious that Israel has lost the meaning of the word culture and has no degree of conscience or censorship to speak of.

At 9:20 in the evening (thank goodness none of my children happened to be in the room as they so often are with the TV on these summer nights), Yael Dan presented a review of an Israeli movie. I find it pathetic that the only scene they could think to provide the public with was of two stark-naked people having sex. There was nothing left to the imagination. The camera focused on what was male, what was female, where to insert what and how to proceed.

As a mother, teacher, and volunteer on a hotline for women, I am offended by this pornography that came into my house uninvited. Every day there are calls to the hotline from mothers who can't understand how their child has fallen victim to sexual harassment or rape, or how such a child ever got such an idea into his head in the first place and even knew what to do. Well, now I can reassure them that their children must have been watching *Yoman Tarbut* and learned all they needed to know.

I hope someone will have the time and insight to arrest this promiscuity before we do damage to yet another generation of children.

THEA LEIBTAT  
Alon Shvut.

### TOLERANCE IN DIASPORA

Sir, - I refer to Dr. Nily Shiryon's letter of July 9 in which he refused the need for a Jewish presence in the Diaspora.

I am a strong religious Zionist, with a great love of my people, whether in or out of Israel, and (although I am Orthodox) whether Conservative or Reform. But when I see the *sinat hinam* that exists in Israel today, I fear that Hashem may see fit once more to expel us from our land.

In America, despite disagreements, there is more tolerance among the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform than in Israel. And despite the great intermarriage rate in the US, there will always be the Orthodox. We will never disappear, and the tolerance and respect held for us by our gentile neighbors is greater than that in Israel. Surely, things might change, and Jews should ever be vigilant even in America; but to safeguard your future, you Israelis could do worse than emulate us Americans.

JAY FEDERMAN, M.D.  
Dix Hills, N.Y.

### JACOB'S LADDER

Sir, - Some friends recommended Jacob's Ladder, the annual folk music festival, both for its music and for its purportedly high standard of organization. Indeed, I was not disappointed by the program or the friendly atmosphere. However, the organization left much to be desired.

The parking arrangements were confused and illogical, causing guests much unnecessary inconvenience.

The sanitation conditions in the women's bathrooms and showers were appalling. Pipes and taps leaked or didn't function, paper was missing, hand dryers didn't work. Worst of all, there was no respect for privacy. A male sanitation worker would appear suddenly out of nowhere, surprising those using the facilities.

Finally, there was inadequate thought given to the question of refuse. Everywhere trees were draped with large plastic bags and garbage. With such a large crowd of guests, many picnicking through the evening and night, it did not take long before these filled up. It is incomprehensible that the garbage was not collected at the crack of dawn. Instead, it was there until late into the morning, overflowing and obtrusive, when finally there was some visible sign of clean-up.

I would like to close by adding that this music event, at the price of NIS 115 a ticket, was not cheap and this especially because so many came as a family. The public expects more for its money and more-over deserves it too.

SUSIE KATZ  
Haifa.

### A MAN'S NAME

Sir, - Shame on Uri Avnery for jesting with a man's name ("All that glitters isn't gold," July 19). He is no better than the crude Egyptian press that made fun of Netanyahu's name when he visited Egypt.

But "strike at a great man and you will not miss" (Sophocles). Dore Gold's reputation and name for clear thinking will survive Avnery's base slander.

Avnery thinks Netanyahu "knows nothing about Palestinians" and "has surrounded himself with people who apparently don't know much more." Neither does Avnery, who listens to the Palestinians' "experts" who tell him, as he himself says about experts, what he wants to hear.

Gold doesn't have to understand the Palestinians as much as the Israeli public that elected Netanyahu. He does that better than Avnery.

S. SPIRO  
Kfar Sava.

### THE PALESTINIAN COVENANT

Sir, - Concerning the continuing question as to whether or not the Palestine National Council canceled the PLO covenant at the PNC meeting on April 24, the public can make its own judgment by viewing the only video taken of the meeting by the only Palestinian TV crew that was authorized by the PNC to film the session.

The Institute for Peace Education purchased this critically important audiovisual material and makes it available to the public for scrutiny. The video shows the vote which took place, following PNC chairman Za'atari's explanation that the vote was not on changing the covenant, but rather on the establishment of a subcommittee to look into the matter.

Readers who are interested in obtaining the video, with Hebrew or English subtitles, in the NTSC or PAL system, may do so by sending a fax or e-mail message to the Institute for Peace Education, fax (02) 623-6470, or e-mail [media@aicom.co.il](mailto:media@aicom.co.il).

SARA ROSENBLUM,  
Executive Secretary,  
Institute for Peace Education  
Jerusalem.

### RELIGIOUS PARTIES

Sir, - For thousands of years, the Jewish religion was the one thing that kept our people together. Nowadays, the one thing that is tearing our people apart is the so-called religious parties and many of their followers. I use the word "so-called" advisedly because they should well know that first and foremost one has to be a *mensch* before one can call oneself religious. Throwing stones (even on a Shabbat) and behaving like they do in the Knesset would seem to be anything but religious.

Religion should be kept out of politics and all the religious parties should cease behaving like spoilt children and threatening to pull out of the government whenever something is not to their liking.

JOHN S. COHEN  
Ra'anana.

### JOHNATHAN POLLARD

Sir, - Since the strength of my husband's case has always rested on the truth, I wish to keep the facts straight and correct a misquote attributed to me. My husband, Jonathan Pollard, has been incarcerated for a total of 11 years, seven of those spent in isolation. He has endured 11 years of empty promises regarding his release.

We deeply appreciate *The Jerusalem Post's* editorial support.

ESTHER POLLARD  
Jerusalem.

### JAY BUSHINSKY

negotiations with Syria," he said, adding that "the issue of where they take place is less important."

Hussein's trip to Damascus was evidently preceded by a clandestine rendezvous with Netanyahu in London. It gave the prime minister an opportunity to present his "Lebanon First" proposal according to which Israel would carry out a staged withdrawal of its forces from southern Lebanon. This would require the entry of Lebanon's regular army into the so-called security zone, the disarming of Hizbullah and safeguards for the officers and men of the South Lebanese Army.

Although Assad did not endorse Netanyahu's scheme, it remains as a standing and potentially constructive offer insofar as the prime minister is concerned.

The apparent fact that Middle East peacemaking is no longer an American diplomatic monopoly - and that's no bad thing

### Middle East peacemaking may no longer be an American diplomatic monopoly - and that's no bad thing

with one another they usually stick to the issues. But if there is a go-between, mediator or moderator, they may end up more interested in making points with him or her than in burying the hatchet.

In any case Secretary of State Christopher is evidently about to leave the Clinton administration and retire from public life. His successor will probably not take office until after the US presidential election. This could deny the Middle East a shunting American secretary of state until the end of this year.

And Mubarak and Hussein? They may well have been driven by the awareness that diplomatic intervention by Russia and France is in the offing, and that these countries' designs on the Middle East could be considerably more ambitious than those of seemingly altruistic America.

The writer is with the Chicago-Sun Times.

## POSTSCRIPT

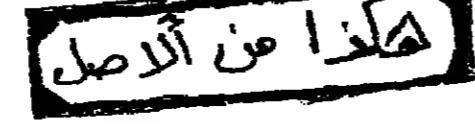
ANIMALS ARE being blamed by firemen for more than two dozen fires in Tokyo over the past year.

Rats were responsible for 15 of the fires, four were caused by pet dogs and cats, another four by birds and cockroaches and one by a spider.

Fire broke out at a night club after rats chewed through an electric cable above the ceiling. In another incident, four pet cats playing near a kerosene stove knocked over cardboard boxes setting a warehouse ablaze.

Even a spider caused a fire by spinning its web inside a cooking stove. The web caused a gas leak that resulted in fire.

One time, cockroach droppings ignited in a microwave oven.





# BUSINESS & FINANCE

Wednesday, August 7, 1996

## Agrexco privatization may take two years

DAVID HARRIS

PLANS to privatize Agrexco, Israel's largest agricultural exporter, could take up to two years to implement, the company said yesterday.

Managing Director Shlomo Tirosh is keen to see Agrexco put into the producers' hands; they currently hold a 25 percent stake in the firm. Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan gave his consent to the privatization plan on Monday.

The government currently holds 50% of Agrexco shares, with Tnuva and the producers' boards both having a 25% share.

The government's shares would be sold in bundles to the various producing organizations or regions.

It is still unclear how the government as a whole will react to the suggestion, but Tnuva Managing Director Arik Reichman said yesterday the cooperative will consider the issue and work according to its interest.

"My duty is to work for the shareholders, to safeguard assets, or to sell them at a suitable price; we were inactive partners and will consider our position," he said.

Agrexco appears disappointed that neither the government nor Tnuva have invested in the company and merely acted as voting shareholders.

If the privatization goes ahead, there could be more room for growers to export independently. However, Agrexco said yesterday it believes there will remain distinct logistical advantages in exporting via the company.

In the 1995 to 1996 season, Agrexco's turnover reached \$650 million. The feeling in the company is that, once fully privatized, Agrexco can maintain that size turnover or even increase it.

The privatization proposal will next be considered by the Government Companies Authority.

## US hopes to launch first PA industrial park by fall

DAVID HARRIS

THE US wants the first Palestinian industrial park to be under construction before the Cairo economic summit in November, US Undersecretary for Trade Stuart Eizenstat said last night.

During the last full day of his visit to Israel, Eizenstat drew attention to the economic plight of the Palestinians, cast doubt on the immediate creation of a regional bank and commented on the Israeli government's economic reform program.

Regarding the negotiations to set up industrial parks in Gaza, Eizenstat said Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu had agreed to the first of these being set up entirely within the Gaza strip, alongside the border at Karmi.

Netanyahu indicated this week the park could straddle the Gaza-Israel border, Eizenstat said, but added he favors the first phase being built entirely in Gaza, with a second section in Israel possibly being added later.

During a meeting with National

Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, Eizenstat said he got assurances that the necessary water and electricity supplies for the park would be in place as soon as possible.

"This will help create jobs and give a jump-start to the industrialization of the territories," Eizenstat said. The US has set aside \$6 million for the project and Israel has pledged \$14m.

Action is urgently required in the territories, according to Eizenstat. "There is profound pessimism in the Palestinian business community," he said. "My visit to the territories has dramatized for me the gravity of the economic plight of the Palestinians."

Plans for a Middle East Development Bank may not be realized this year, Eizenstat said. While the White House supports establishing the bank, which would take the lead in funding large infrastructure projects, Congress seems unlikely to agree to giving \$52m, before the US elections in November.

Meanwhile, Eizenstat told Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky that a group of US businesspeople will visit Israel before the Cairo summit to offer advice on liberalizing the economy.

The US supports Netanyahu's program of budget cuts, fiscal discipline, deregulation and privatization, he said.

Israel should serve as an economic role model for other developing countries, he continued, and urged it to further open its telecommunications market.

"If Bezeq can compete in India and the former Soviet Union, it can stand competition here in Israel."

During the meeting with Sharansky, Eizenstat complained again about the size of the US share of Israeli imports (19%). With all the help the US gives, Israel still cannot find a way to increase purchases from the US, he said.

In response, government officials pointed out that imports from the US grew in the first half of 1996 by 27%, or \$0.68 billion, in comparison to the same period last year.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

**Amendment would cut benefits to non-priority areas:** "Approved investments" in places which are not defined as national priority areas will from now on get only a two-year tax exemption instead of four years, according to an amendment to the Capital Investments Encouragement Law approved by the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday. The amendment, which is meant to increase the relative advantage to investors of putting up their plants in development areas instead of in the center of the country, will come up for its second and third readings in the plenum at a special session scheduled for next week.

The change was decided on by the previous government last December. Due to the early elections, however, the government succeeded in getting the bill only through its first Knesset reading.

*Evelyn Gordon*

**Conditions for rail and port workers to be discussed:** The pension and tax rights of Airports Authority and Ports and Railways Authority workers will be discussed by a joint committee set up by the ministries of Finance and Transport, together with the Histadrut. During a meeting on Monday night, Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy told Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz he has no intention of privatizing either authority.

*David Harris*

**Commercial turnover down by half:** The growth in commercial turnover slowed to a monthly average of 0.4 percent from January to May, the Central Bureau of Statistics said yesterday. This compared to a growth rate of 0.7% a month in the second half of 1995 and 1.0% in the first half. Turnover grew by 10% last year, the annual rate so far this year is 4.8%.

*David Harris*

**Scheme to help jobless start businesses:** Unemployed people in Haifa will be encouraged to open small businesses in an experimental scheme launched this week by the National Insurance Institute. NIS 1.3 million will be invested in the project. Those interested will attend a three-month course while continuing to receive unemployment benefits. During a further six months participants will receive advice on and financial help for setting up small enterprises. If the experiment proves successful the scheme will be launched nationally.

*David Harris*

**Seven thousand new immigrants found jobs in industrial factories in the last three years,** according to the Manufacturers Association. This absorption took place in conjunction with the Jewish Agency.

Representatives of leading Israeli companies are scouting for more employees throughout the world. The professionals being sought would come from the engraving, welding, tool operating and electronic engineering industries.

*David Harris*

## Study forecasts investment growth in eastern Europe

PRAGUE (Reuters) - New infrastructure projects should boost a surge in foreign direct investment (FDI) in reforming eastern European economies which have already become top global FDI destinations, according to a study by Germany's Dresdner Bank.

In a study of post-Communist Europe, Dresdner economist Mark

Piazolo said FDI, which has surged in recent years, would still be concentrated in the economies seen as most developed - Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

"The total stock of FDI in Hungary amounted to one-fourth of GDP at the end of 1995, only slightly lower than Malaysia (29 percent) and significantly higher than in

Mexico and China," the study said. "With 13% and 14% of GDP, the Czech Republic and Estonia attracted Asian levels of FDI."

Foreign direct investment is key to economic reform in these countries as it not only brings in new capital - since financial markets in the region are underdeveloped - but also technology and know-how.

Piazolo said the Czech Republic would probably pass Hungary as the most attractive FDI destination in the region this year and next with expected new flows of \$3 billion each year, up from just over \$2.5b. in 1995.

Poland and Hungary each should attract about \$2b. for each of the next two years, after getting

\$1.13b. and \$4.41b, respectively in 1995.

After major telecom privatizations in Hungary and the Czech Republic last year, new FDI in Eastern Europe will also be targeted at energy, road, rail, and airport construction.

"Even politically sensitive projects, such as toll roads, are no longer taboo," Piazolo said.

## MINISTER

(Continued from Page 1) hours he is in his office huddling with Bardugo, who ran for Knesset but failed to win a seat.

One day, virtually the only meetings listed on Levy's schedule were a session with a Jewish millionaire from Australia who gave money to the Likud, and a photo session with the Government Press Office.

Consultations on substantive issues are rarely held, sources say. Foreign Ministry deputy director-general in charge of the various regions are being forced to make decisions on their own; alternately, they must make excuses to foreign governments as to why they cannot answer questions - the reason being that they rarely have direct access to their own minister.

Furthermore, Levy turned down a meeting this week with a visiting US official, who foreign ministers always see.

It remains unclear how many foreign ministers Levy will meet with when he attends the UN General Assembly session this September.

While Shimon Peres was renowned for meeting close to a 100 foreign officials during his annual UN visits as foreign minister, during Levy's previous tenure between 1990-1992, he refused to see more than a handful on each trip.

During Levy's last stint as foreign minister, his counterparts

abroad hailed his political moderation on the peace process. European ministers reportedly liked the fact that he spoke French and took them seriously, while they received at best second billing to American officials in the Prime Minister's Office.

So, while he may have the talent, it is not clear if he is willing to devote adequate energy to his job.

## SYRIA

(Continued from Page 1) "Syria...could not be fooled by the unserious talk which Netanyahu is trying to market through his claims about the resumption of talks," *Tishreen* said.

Today, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will hold talks with Syrian President Hafez Assad as part of heightened Arab coordination on the Middle East peace process.

The meeting in Alexandria is the latest in a series that followed Netanyahu's election in May.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa told reporters yesterday that Mubarak and Assad "will give special attention to the Syrian and Lebanese tracks in light of the possibility of resuming talks...based on trial balloons linked to movement on the Lebanese track," a reference to the "Lebanon first" plan.

## LEVY

(Continued from Page 1)

headed by Netanyahu's foreign policy adviser Dore Gold. In a television interview last night, the premier backed Gold's diplomatic efforts.

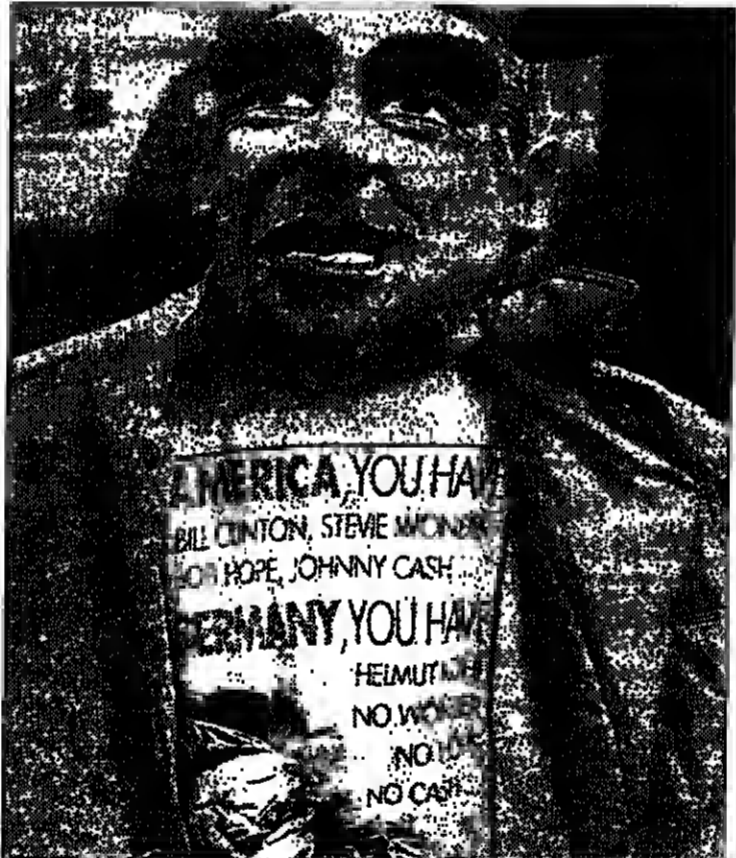
Diplomats also complained about Gold's visit to Washington last week, even though US-Israel relations have always been controlled by the Prime Minister's Office.

There were efforts yesterday to reduce the tension. Acting Foreign Ministry Director-General Eitan Bentsur told diplomats that instead of going to the media with their criticism, they should forward their complaints to him.

Last night, Bentsur and Gold spoke by phone and each promised to act responsibly and work closely together in the future.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu phoned Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak last night and briefed him on his visit with King Hussein in Amman.

It is said to be important to Netanyahu that Egypt not get the impression that Israel is asking Amman to be a mediator between Jerusalem and Damascus, and that it be clear that the US will be the only mediator on the Syrian track.



A Bonn T-shirt shop displays a dummy with a mask of Germany's Finance Minister Theo Waigel yesterday. The T-shirt sports a drawing of chancellor Helmut Kohl laying on his desk. (AP)

## PM, Meridor, Frenkel in pivotal talks today

DAVID HARRIS

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, Finance Minister Dan Meridor and Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel are today scheduled to hold their third and possibly final meeting to discuss structural changes in the economy.

The three will be joined in the Prime Minister's Office by senior officials from the Treasury and Bank of Israel.

The meeting was to have taken place two weeks ago, with the cabinet considering the proposals before the end of July. No reasons were given by Netanyahu or Meridor for the delay.

The discussions are likely to focus on deregulation rather than privatization, the responsibility for which has now passed from the Treasury to the prime minister.

High on the agenda is thought to be the demonopolization of the Israel Electric Corporation, Bezeq, Egged and Dan.

Other issues believed under consideration include allowing provident funds to have greater freedom to invest abroad and making such activity tax-exempt, loosening restrictions on business investments outside Israel, and enabling Israeli companies to register on a larger number of stock exchanges worldwide.

The Histadrut is fighting the proposed reforms and threatening further strike action. The labor federation argues that privatization and demonopolization would lead to widespread unemployment. However, Meridor says the changes will eventually benefit the workforce and the economy as a whole.

## New Dimension Software profits drop

NEW Dimension Software's second quarter net income dropped 67 percent to \$130,903, compared with \$402,221 in the corresponding period last year, the company announced yesterday.

"The drop in profits is due to a 25 percent drop in sales in North America," said company CFO Izhak Zion, adding that the decline is part of the business cycle. "Sometimes sales are slower in one

quarter than another."

A 12% decrease in second quarter sales in Europe and a 54% drop in the rest of the world, caused second quarter revenues to fall from \$9.2 million last year to \$8.86 in 1996. However, the revenues from sales of enterprise products as a percentage of total new product sales reached 37% in the second quarter.

The Tel Aviv-based company's Nasdaq-traded shares were up from \$18.50 to \$18.75 in early morning trading.

New Dimension Software is a vendor of integrated software solutions that allow organizations to manage data center production flow end-to-end. The company's CONTROL products are designed to help users effectively manage production flow.

ELBIT Vision Systems Ltd.'s second quarter net income for 1996 increased \$10,000 compared to a loss of \$23,000 for the same period in 1995.

## COMPANY RESULTS

JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

and supports automatic vision inspection and quality monitoring systems, including systems for the textile industry.

The company's systems are designed to increase the accuracy, consistency and speed of the detection and identification of defects in the manufacturing process in order to reduce labor costs, improve product quality and increase manufacturing efficiency. (Bloomberg)

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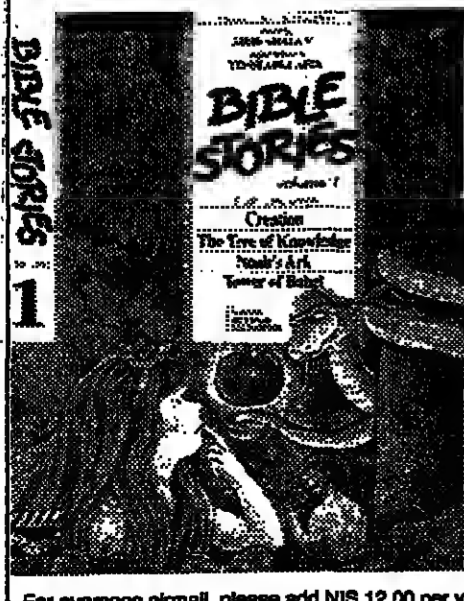
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ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

JERUSALEM DISTRICT ELECTRICITY Co. Ltd. Tender No. 16/96 Single end Three Phase Meters

Bids are invited for the supply of single and three phase meters - Tender No. 16/96.

A copy of the specification and conditions of tender can be obtained from the Secretary of the Board of Directors, 15 Salah El-Din Street, East Jerusalem, Tel. 02-282 335/8/7, until August 22, 1996.

Bids should be submitted not later than 12 noon on September 15, 1996.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (29.7.96)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	4.875	5.375	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	5.375	4.000	4.125	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.750	1.375	2.250	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	1.000	1.125	1.500	
Yen (10 million yen)				

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (6.8.96)					
Currency	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.5188	3.5756	3.07	3.23	3.5468
German mark	3.1273	3.1773	2.76	2.92	3.1510
French franc	2.1025	2.1365	2.06	2.17	2.1187
Japanese yen (100)	4.8128	4.8906	4.73	4.98	4.8532
Dutch florin	0.6188	0.6288	0.50	0.54	0.6235
Swiss franc	2.9227	2.9699	2.67	3.02	2.9413
Norwegian krona	1.6750	1.6953	1.84	1.84	1.8898
Swedish krona	2.5891	2.6309	2.54	2.67	2.6113
Denmark krone	0.4733	0.4810	0.46	0.49	0.4771
Finland mark	0.4873	0.4922	0.47	0.51	0.4908
Portugal escudo	0.5440	0.5528	0.53	0.57	0.5485
Canadian dollar	0.9952	1.0058	0.98	0.97	0.7009
Australian dollar	2.2732	2.3099	2.23	2.35	2.2904
Israeli shekel	2.4207	2.4598	2.37	2.50	2.4406
S. African rand	0.6895	0.7108	0.68	0.72	0.7046
Belgian franc (10)	1.0203	1.0358	1.00	1.06	1.0287
Austrian schilling (10)	2.9890	3.0373	2.93	3.08	3.0131
Italian lire (1000)	2.0625	2.0958	2.02	2.13	2.0787
Jordanian dinar	4.3500	4.5500	4.36	4.65	4.4429
Egyptian pound	0.8900	0.9700	0.89	0.87	0.9729
Irish punt	3.9571	4.0210	—	—	3.9884
Spanish peseta (100)	5.0174	5.0984	4.93	5.17	5.0611
	2.4782	2.5182	2.43	2.56	2.4995

\*These rates vary according to bank. \*\*Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

لنا من الاصل



Key Representative Rates
Change
US dollar ... NIS 3.1510 +0.13%
Sterling ... NIS 4.6532 -0.25%
Mark ... NIS 2.1197 -0.60%

NEW YORK STOCK MARKET
New York market indexes
Last Change
DJ Industrials 9986.11 +21.83
DJ Industrials 9986.11 +21.83

Other stock market indexes
Last Change
NYSE 100 3788.4 +1.1
NASDAQ 4111.7 +0.2

Israeli stocks in NY
Last Change
Am Fin 40.25 +1.2
Am Fin 40.25 +1.2

INFLATION MARKETS
Dollar crosses rates (US)
Last Change
Pound 1.628 -0.001

Libor rates
Last Change
Dollar 3 months 5.513 +0.013

Foreign financial data courtesy of
CommStock Trading Ltd.
Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds

US COMMODITIES AND METALS
Last Change
Cocoa (Sep) 1.54 +0.13

Spot market metals (US)
Last Change
Gold 385.65 +0.5

London metal fixes
Last Change
Gold 385.65 +0.5

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

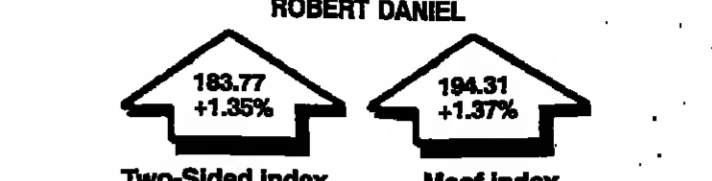
Multi-sided trading Two-sided trading AFTERNOON MORNING
Name Price % Change Volume % Volume
Bank Leumi 178.00 0.0 1000 0.0

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

NEW YORK
Name Price % Change
Alcoa 27.12 -0.37
Amgen 42.12 +0.24

Market up on optimistic company reports

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET



STOCKS indexes rose nearly 1.5 percent on optimism that company earnings will show strength and on trading that followed Israeli shares on Wall Street.

The Two-Sided Index climbed 1.35% to 183.77, while the Maof Index jumped 1.37% to 194.31.

Across the exchange some NIS 70.5 million of shares traded. Advancing issues and decliners were about even.

Euro bourses pause, dollar steady

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - European stock markets paused for breath yesterday after recent gains, although weakness in the franc prompted the Paris bourse to slip more than shares in other key centers.

The Loodoo stock exchange ended with little net change and Frankfurt was up a little. Wall Street, which often sets the European trend, followed Moody's small loss with a drop of around a third of a percent while European markets were open.

Market analysts said investors were likely to continue cashing in profits for now after US blue-chip shares advanced 4.5 percent last week as fears of higher interest rates ebbed.

Primarily the market is consolidating from sharp gains last week and I think it will give back a little more," said Stanley Nabi, vice chairman at Wood Struthers & Windrop in New York.

On a currency market enjoying a more of a summer lull after Moody's flurry of activity in the Swiss franc, the dollar regained some of its recent losses but was below its highs in the afternoon. This summer trading exaggerated some moves.

Currency traders said a stronger-than-expected 1.2% rise in June German industry orders, after news that seasonally adjusted jobless figures fell 5,000 in July, cooled speculation on lower German interest rates and a pickup in the dollar's rise.

Traders turned their attention to this week's US Treasury quarterly refunding auctions, starting with \$19 billion of three-year notes later yesterday.

Dealers said demand at the auctions could be disappointing after last week's bond market rally and Japanese interest was likely to be poor, which could unsettle the dollar.

CURRENCY CROSS RATES
MARK STERLING YEN SF Ffr
MARK 2.282282 - 184.2436 1.052948 7.770082

## Bet. J'lem suffers 5-1 drubbing to Bodo/Glimt

IF they didn't know it before last night, Betar Jerusalem and the rest of Israel now know as a fact that the soccer played near the arctic circle is of far superior quality to that seen in our warmer climes.

Betar was taken to the cleaners by Bodo/Glimt and the visitors' display of athletic, yet economical soccer earned them a well-deserved 5-1 win over the host side.

The Jerusalemites thought they were going on a summer afternoon stroll when the match started out. They did not try to blitz their opponents, as they did against Floriana of Malta in the previous round. Obviously thinking that the heat and humidity would overpower the Norwegians, Betar appeared prepared to bide their time, waiting for the visitors to collapse.

The collapse began in the 23rd minute, but it was the Betaris who began floundering all over the place.

The Jerusalemites' walking-pace style of play played right into Bodo/Glimt's hands - or rather feet - when Stig Johansson pounced on a loose ball on the edge of the area to drill it low and hard past Zik Korfein in the Betar goal.

The Jerusalemites were stunned, and the 9,000 supporters, including at least one Norwegian and his two daughters attending the match, were also left speechless. This was not the way things were supposed to happen, at least not according to the script written by the home team.

But if the first goal was supposed to awaken the boys in yellow and black and make them play a little faster and with some more commitment, it did not happen. They obviously didn't know how to improvise when the script goes awry.

Betar kept giving the ball away in a terrible short-passing game that appeared to be played by something akin to a group of tor-

OBI LEWIS

toises. The Norwegians, in case anybody hadn't noticed, were playing a real game of soccer, running and committing themselves to tackle and had no trouble winning the ball in one-on-one situations.

They moved well into the empty spaces - the Jerusalemites made sure there were plenty of these - and speedily made their way into attacking positions which put the Betar goal under serious threat.

Johansson struck for a second time in the 36th minute, as the Betar defense was totally exposed yet again. With three defenders in the back standing in a straight line, the Norwegians had little trouble splitting the cardboard fortifications which Eli Cohen had devised as a secret weapon for his side.

The Jerusalemites, try as they might, could not string any moves together. Ronnen Harazi and Eli Ohana failed to create any situations and when they did have the ball up front, they were dispossessed after getting themselves into a muddle with the Norwegian defense. Itzik Zohar wasted several opportunities to have a bash at the Norwegians' goalkeeper Ronnie Vostad.

The two-goal deficit with which the Betaris went into the dressing rooms at halftime was already bad enough. They knew they had their work cut out if there was to be any chance of them advancing to the pool stages of the competition.

Sergei Tariak reduced the arrears just one minute after the restart, as Betar appeared to respond to the serious talking-to they must have received from Cohen at halftime. He struck a low hard shot from the edge of the area after an excellent through-ball from Yossi Abuksis, who tried very hard for the home team, but try was all he was capable of.

Betar's blitzkrieg lasted for just six minutes. They stormed all over

the men from Bodo, but it all petered out when another terrible defensive lapse saw Ronar Barik cut through the back line to receive a ball from his brother, Arian Barik, who was clear on the right. The former Barik made no mistake with his shot. Leaving the floundering Korfein no chance.

Regardless of the amount of goals Betar could string together, an impressive tally of three away goals would now surely be enough for Bodo/Glimt to sit on.

Like a disciplined outfit which does what it is paid to do, the all-blue clad Norwegians kept pecking away at Betar. There were no wild celebrations when they scored a goal, they just got on with the task at hand. The next effort was the finest of the evening. Again, Ronar Barik took the honors when he volleyed a superb low shot from 25 meters which had the Betar players totally stunned and the crowd applauding the feat with genuine appreciation.

The usual staunch home crowd had finally come to terms with the humiliation and was now prepared to sit back and enjoy the total mastery display by the visitors.

The Betaris continued to try and do something. But the cupboard was bare, they had no ideas, and more importantly, no commitment. The Norwegians, for their part, took the match seriously until the end.

Zohar tried a pot shot which hardly tested Vostad in the 72nd minute and when Jan Derek Arensson made it 5-1 three minutes later, the traffic jams outside Teddy Stadium began to build up quickly.

Knowing that they had lost all hope of salvaging this tie, the Betaris continued their walking-pace short-passing game, and when they did manage to get into a scoring situation, tried a little bit too hard to set up a dead-certain shot at goal. Invariably the Bodo players pounced and dispersed the danger.

In Budapest: Budapest Vasutas (Hungary) 3, Barry Town (Wales) 1 (2-1). Scores: Salford City (England) 1, Borussia Dortmund (Germany) 1 (0-1). Goals: Ferenc Gyöngyi (5th), Gabor Egressy (42nd), Jozsef Farkas (67th pen). Barry Town - Terry Evans (14th). Attendance: 2,000.

In Helsinki: Helsingfors (Sweden) 1, Dynamo-93 Minsk (Belarus) 1 (1-0). Scores: Helsingfors - Martin Pringle (45th), Dynamo-93 Minsk - Rodislav Orskov (48th). Attendance: 6,007.

In Helsinki: Halmtstad (Sweden) 0, Vardar (Macedonia) 0. Attendance: 2,479.

HEATHER CHAIT

GAL Friedman still has to learn what being a hero means.

Israel's Olympic bronze medalist windsurfer was clearly overwhelmed by the welcome at Ben-Gurion Airport yesterday as he and several other members of the delegation returned to an official reception.

To greet them were sports officials, family and dozens of school-children from Karkur, where Friedman lives.

The 20-year-old hero was at a loss for words and when called upon to speak, could only manage a few thank-yous before surrendering the microphone to his coach Gur Steinberg.

Steinberg, also unfamiliar with the limelight, expressed his deep satisfaction, noting that after the victory, he realized how Friedman had taken on, and beaten, the world's best.

"We never felt inferior to any country," he said proudly, adding, "Gal arrived in Atlanta as well prepared as the best."

Deputy Minister of Culture, Education and Sport Moshe Peled, who also returned from Atlanta, tactfully said that conclusions would be drawn at a later stage based on the performance of the athletes. He hinted that the squad for Sydney in the year 2000 would "be twice or even triple" the Atlanta delegation which dumbered 25.

## Maccabi Tel Aviv prepares to take on Turkey's finest

MACCABI Tel Aviv has the daunting task of trying to set the face of Israeli soccer on Europe's stage tonight when it locks horns with Turkey's Fenerbahce in the first leg qualifier of the European Champions' Cup. A bumper crowd of over 30,000 has been forecast by Maccabi officials for the game that marks the reopening of the National Stadium Ramat Gan after pitch refurbishment.

Victory over the two legs will give the Tel Avivans a place in the lucrative Champions' League, but on paper the pride of Istanbul is from a different firmament and should have little trouble advancing past the Israeli title holders.

Fenerbahce, founded in 1907, is Turkey's most successful side, boasting a massive fan base following that ensures packed stadia for most of its matches.

The Turks will also be boasted by



HOME COMING - Gal Friedman and Yael Arad are greeted by young fans at Ben-Gurion Airport yesterday. (Debbie Han)

President of the Olympic Committee of Israel, Yoram Oberkovich highlighted the moment during the closing ceremony when the victims of the Munich massacre were remembered for the first time after 24 years and thanked the President of the International Olympic

Committee for making the gesture.

Yael Arad, who returned to Israel earlier in the week, looked relaxed and sure of her decision to retire from judo.

"I'm very proud of my career, and of my performance in Atlanta. I put up a good fight and it's just a

pity that it wasn't a bit better so I could win." Sharing Friedman's bewilderment was his 16-year-old girlfriend, Michal Peleg, who was flown to Atlanta by his sponsor to celebrate the victory.

When asked how they spent their time together, she said without hesitating, "Shopping."

## Shearer comes home to Newcastle

NEWCASTLE (Reuters) - England striker Alan Shearer completed his move to Newcastle United yesterday in a world record £15 million deal.

He told reporters and fans: "If any club or supporters deserve success it's this club and hopefully I and the rest of the players can bring it."

Thousands of fans wearing black and white club colors packed a large car park at the Newcastle ground in anticipation of Shearer's arrival.

Newcastle-born Shearer, who will be 26 next Tuesday, is due to make his first start for his new club against Manchester United in the Charity Shield at Wembley on Sunday.

## RESULTS OF UEFA CUP QUALIFYING ROUND

First leg soccer matches yesterday:

In Olomouc: Sigma Olomouc (Czech Republic) 1, Hutnik Krakov (Poland) 0. Scores: Minsk Beranek (17th min). UEFA closed the game to spectators as punishment for a disruption at a Sigma Olomouc game in 1992.

In Sofia: Slavia Sofia (Bulgaria) 1, Tirol Innsbruck (Austria) 1 (0-1). Scores: Slavia - Vesselin Toshev (76th), Tirol Richard Kitzibehler (32nd). Attendance: 4,000.

In Bucharest: Rapid Bucharest (Romania) 1, Lokomotiv Sofia (Bulgaria) 0 (0-0). Score: Simion Mirons (75th). Attendance: 18,000.

In Kosice: FC Kosice (Slovakia) 0, Celtic (Scotland) 0. Attendance: 9,000.

In Helsinki: HJK Helsinki (Finland) 2, Chernomorets Odessa (Ukraine) 2 (0-2). Scores: HJK - Mika Lehtosuo (56th), Kalle Lehtinen (65th), Chernomorets - Serguei Mizhin (35th), Vladimir Moussoline (44th). Attendance: 1,250.

In Tallin: Dynamo Tallin (Georgia) 2, Molde (Norway) 1 (2-0). Scores: Dynamo - Tihoni Kakhi Gogishvili (13th), Alexander Iashvili (19th), Molde - Ole-Eirik Stavrum (66th). Attendance: 18,000.

In Moscow: Dynamo Moscow (Russia) 1, Jazz (Finland) 1 (1-1). Scores: Dynamo Moscow - Andria Kobaylov (15th min).

## Jazz - Saku Laaksonen (30th).

Attendance: 2,500.

In Vilnius: Zalgiris Vilnius (Lithuania) 1, Aberdeen (Scotland) 4 (0-1). Scores: Zalgiris - Tomas Razanavskas (49th), Aberdeen - Billy Dodds (43rd, 81st pen), Stephen Glass (72nd), Duncan Shearer (90th).

In Moldocineu: Belarus: Dinamo Minsk (Belarus) 2, Beşiktaş JK (Turkey) 1. Scores: Minsk - Vladimir Makovsky (52nd, 61st), Beşiktaş - Sercar (60th). Attendance: 4,000.

In Riga: Skonto (Latvia) 0, Malmo (Sweden) 3 (0-1). Scores: Anders Anderson (35th), Niclas Kindvall (60th), Jorgen Ohlsson (80th). Attendance: 1,500.

In Belgrade: Partizan (Yugoslavia) 0, Nacional Bucharest (Romania) 0. Attendance: 2,000.

In Warsaw: Legia Warsaw (Poland) 3, Haka Valkeakoski (Finland) 0 (2-0). Scores: Legia - Piotr Mosor (5th), Ryszard Skowron (27th), Roman Orszczuk (88th). Attendance: 5,000.

In Copenhagen: FC Lyngby (Denmark) 0, Mura (Slovenia) 1 (0-1). Attendance: 842.

In Larnaca: Anorthosis Famagusta (Cyprus) 1, Neuchâtel (Switzerland) 2 (1-1). Scores: Anorthosis - Cosmas Stavrou (17th), Xarnax - Alain Verrier (29th), Marek Lesniak (57th). Attendance: 7,000.

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### Bulls sign Rodman for one year

Free agent Dennis Rodman signed a one-year contract Monday to remain with the Chicago Bulls.

The Bulls did not announce terms of the contract. But Rodman's agent, Dwight Manley, on Sunday said it was for slightly less than the \$10 million Rodman had demanded.

Rodman earlier said he was insulted by the Bulls' original offers of \$5 million and \$6 million.

"We are very happy to have Dennis back for his second year with us," said Jerry Krause, vice president of basketball operations. "He had a great season, and we're confident he will be even better this year."

### Bullets re-sign Howard

Five days after the NBA rejected his seven-year, \$100 million deal with the Miami Heat, free agent Juwan Howard has re-signed with the Washington Bullets.

The Bullets signed Howard to a seven-year deal Monday after agreeing to forfeit their first-round selection in next year's college draft. Terms of the pact were not disclosed.

"We are very pleased that Juwan Howard will be in the Bullets uniform next season and for years to come," Bullets general manager Wes Unseld said in a statement announcing the signing.

### Lemieux to sit out World Cup

Mario Lemieux, still undecided about returning to the Pittsburgh Penguins, has ruled out playing for Canada in the World Cup.

"In no way should this be construed as a signal that I will not be playing for the Penguins this year," Lemieux said Monday. "I still need a little more time to decide."

## BASEBALL STANDINGS

NATIONAL LEAGUE				AMERICAN LEAGUE			
East Division		West Division		East Division		West Division	
Atlanta	W	L	Pct.	New York	W	L	Pct.
Montreal	81	49	.555	Baltimore	66	44	.500
New York	53	60	.469	Toronto	52	60	.464
Florida	32	60	.348	Chicago	51	62	.450
Philadelphia	47	65	.420	Detroit	38	73	.342
Central Division				Central Division			
Houston	80	52	.636	Cleveland	67	45	.598
St. Louis	60	52	.536	Chicago	62	50	.554
Cincinnati	54	54	.500	Milwaukee	56	57	.481
Chicago	54	57	.488	Minnesota	52	59	.468
Pittsburgh	50	62	.446	Kansas City	51	62	.451
West Division				West Division			
San Diego	60	54	.526	Texas	62	50	.554
Los Angeles	58	54	.518	Seattle	60	50	.545
Colorado	37	56	.398	Oakland	56	57	.496
San Francisco	46	64	.418	California	52	59	.468

MONDAY'S NL RESULTS: Philadelphia 3, Pittsburgh 0. St. Louis 8, San Diego 3. Chicago 7, New York 3. Florida 16, Colorado 9. Cincinnati 4, San Francisco 3.

MONDAY'S AL RESULTS: Milwaukee 13, Oakland 3. Toronto 1, Cincinnati 0. Baltimore 13, Cleveland 10. New York 5, Kansas City 2. Chicago 15, Texas 5.

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# Coalition MKs suggest alternative budget cuts

A GROUP of senior Likud MKs presented the Treasury yesterday with an alternative proposal for how to achieve NIS 4.9 billion in budget cuts in 1997.

The alternate proposal was prepared by a committee headed by Meir Sheerit, which included faction chairman Michael Eitan, head of the coalition in the Knesset Finance Committee Silvan Shalom, social caucus chairman Shaul Amor, and Geshet representative Michael Kleiner.

"We wanted to prevent a clash between the faction and the government," Sheerit explained. "The government's proposal was unacceptable to many of us. I, for one, would vote against the budget cuts if the proposal remained unchanged."

The main element of the proposal is to cut NIS 2 billion from the NIS 8.5b. the government contributes each year to the National Insurance Institute's budget, and to force employers to make up the difference. By law, employers are supposed to pay the entire NIS 8.5b. but several years ago, the government decided payroll taxes were too high, and therefore agreed to pay part of the taxes in the employers' stead. However, the law was never amended.

This proposal is almost certain to be opposed by Finance Minister Dan Meridor, who has said repeatedly that eliminating this "subsidy" is another name for a tax increase, which will lead employers to reduce hiring and drive companies with financial difficul-

EVELYN GORDON

ties to close. Sheerit responded that this problem could be solved by examining employers on a case-by-case basis, and continuing the subsidy for those near collapse - though such a solution would be very difficult to implement, if not impossible.

"When you give [the exemption] automatically, to those who need it and those who don't, it's just a gift to the rich," Sheerit said.

A second proposal is to eliminate all NII child and old-age allowances for the wealthiest 10% of the population - people with incomes of NIS 16,000-64,000 a month - unless the recipient could prove real need (for instance, if he had a dozen children to support on NIS 16,000 a month). This would replace the Treasury's plan of cutting first and second child allowances in half for people with up to three children who earn 1-1.5 times the average wage (about NIS 4,500), and eliminating them entirely for people with up to three children who earn more than this. Sheerit said this proposal would cut NIS 415m.-500m. from the budget.

An additional savings of NIS 300m., which the committee listed as optional, could be obtained by cutting child allowances in half for the next wealthiest 10% of the population, who earn NIS 10,000-16,000 a month, he added.

In place of the Treasury's proposal to charge NIS 10 for each visit to a doctor (unless the family

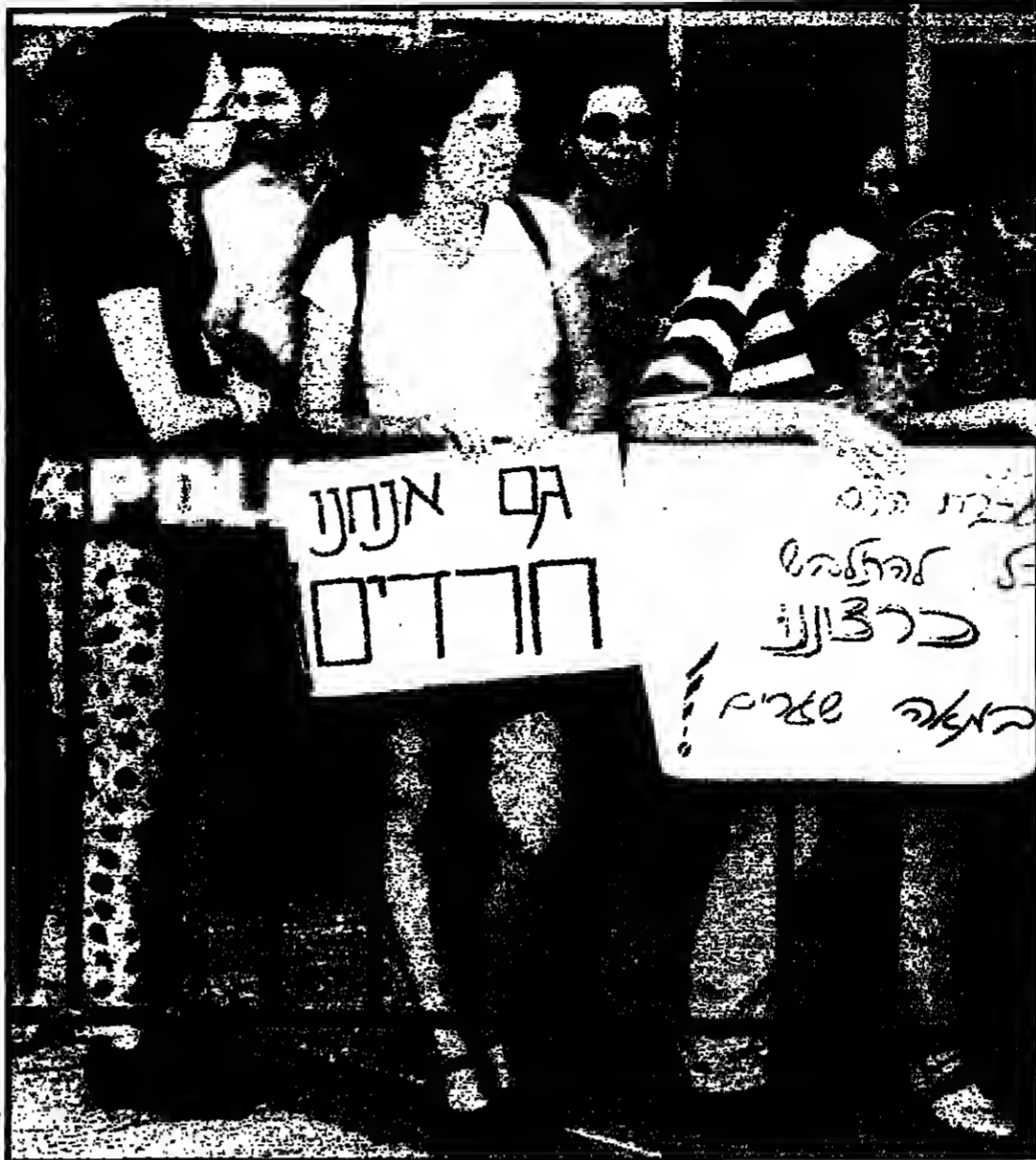
is very poor) and raise the price of medicines by 25%, the Sheerit committee is advocating one of two options, either of which, it says, could save the necessary NIS 500m. One is to raise the national health tax by 0.4%, or NIS 4 for every NIS 1,000 earned; the second is to eliminate the income ceiling on the tax. Currently, income over NIS 16,000 a month is not subject to the tax. These proposals might also encounter opposition from Meridor, however, as he objects to any tax increase.

The committee's fourth proposal is to fine all government-supported institutions which exceed legal limits on salary payments - of which, according to the state comptroller's report, there are many - by the amount of the excess payment. Sheerit estimates that this would save NIS 250m.

The committee's proposal would reinstate the Demobilized Soldiers Law (NIS 150m.), which the Treasury had wanted to repeal, and the NIS 50m. the Treasury had planned to save by postponing the addition of more classroom teaching hours.

Despite this, Sheerit claimed the total savings proposed by the committee would come to NIS 6.2b. The extra money, he said, would be used to start implementing the long school day in development towns, as the Likud promised in its campaign.

"The finance minister has said repeatedly that not all wisdom is located in the Treasury," Sheerit concluded.



Education Ministry workers and women's rights activists demonstrate in the Jerusalem ministry courtyard yesterday against attacks by haredim on women with 'immodest dress.' (Isaac Harari)

**WEATHER**

Jerusalem 20-31  
Tel Aviv 22-31  
Haifa 24-32  
Tiberias 23-35  
Afula 22-35  
Samaria 20-32  
Be'er Sheva 20-35  
Dead Sea 31-39  
East 23-31  
Golan 20-29

Forecast: Partly cloudy to clear. No change in temperatures.

**AROUND THE WORLD**

	LOW	HIGH	
Australian	15	27	clear
Bahia	13	24	partly
Buenos Aires	12	24	rain
Card	12	24	clear
Chicago	21	27	clear
Copenhagen	12	17	partly
Frankfurt	13	24	partly
Geneva	17	23	partly
Helsinki	13	23	clear
Hong Kong	27	32	clear
Jakarta	23	32	partly
London	18	24	partly
Los Angeles	18	27	clear
Moscow	18	27	clear
New York	18	27	partly
Paris	18	27	partly
Rome	18	27	partly
Sao Paulo	18	27	clear
Sydney	18	27	clear
Tokyo	18	27	partly
Zurich	14	24	partly

## Weizman: No drop in IDF verve

EVADING military service is not a new phenomenon, President Ezer Weizman told reporters yesterday. He cautioned them against relying on generalizations about the drop in motivation to serve in the IDF. "Our generation also had draft dodgers, and I would very highly recommend against making declarations about a drop in motivation. I would recommend being wary of generalizations drawn from one meeting," Weizman said, reacting to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's comments at the IDF Induction Center at Tel Hashomer on Monday.

Weizman added that he has met many youths who want to volunteer for elite units. Weizman made his comments at the *brit mila* of Ra'am Revi'i, whose parents, Shefra and Ami, were injured in the IDF. Shefra, who has been wheelchair-bound since being injured seven years ago, gave birth by Caesarian section. The Revi'i's were joined by dozens of other handicapped IDF veterans. Both the president and his wife, Reuma, had aided the couple. (Tim)

## Demonstrators call for 'right to bare arms'

CALL it the War of the Sleeves. More than 250 men and women gathered yesterday in the Education Ministry's courtyard to protest attacks by residents of neighboring Mea She'arim on female employees of the ministry whose clothes do not meet haredi standards of modesty.

ESTHER HECHT  
Ilan, which haredim are demanding be closed on Shabbat. MK Naomi Chazan said the fight was not limited to Jerusalem: "Without a free and open Jerusalem, Israel will not be free and open."

Womee employees of the ministry recalled attacks as long ago as five and 10 years ago, but said the assaults intensified when the recent violent demonstrations on Bar-Ilan began.

"We have a list of more than 30 women who have been attacked in the past six weeks," Jerusalem City Councillor Oman Yekutieli told the crowd. They have been cursed, screamed at, spat upon, manhandled and stoned. Some have had their cars vandalized. But the fight is not just about a bit of shoulder or a stretch of thigh, the speakers said. "This is just one link in a chain that begins with negating a woman's rights over her own body," said City Councillor Michal Shohat.

The protest was organized jointly by ministry employees, the Freedom Front - Judaism Without Coercion and women's organizations, including Na'amat and the Israel Women's Network. A 39-year-old neighborhood resident of Rehov Avraham

expected to cost some NIS 30m. The improvements to the Trans-Samaria Highway are expected to be much more expensive, running to hundreds of millions of shekels. National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon announced last week that replacing one section of this highway would be one of his ministry's first undertakings. Former housing minister Binyamin Ben-

## Court to sentence officers today

A SPECIAL military court will hold a closed-door sentencing today in Tel Aviv for three officers convicted of negligently causing the death by dehydration of two soldiers in an elite commando unit. One of the officers being sentenced is the former commander of Sayeret Matkal, the General Staff Commando unit, Col. Amos Ben-Avraham. The defense reportedly will call MK Ehud Barak, a former chief of general staff and commander of the unit, as a character witness, along with top generals, including OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN  
Levine and OC Intelligence Maj.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon. The case is being keenly watched by most IDF officers as it manifests the growing trend to hold top unit commanders responsible for each and every soldier under their command. IDF commanders say preoccupation with safety regulations is not only forcing the army to delegate more time to precautionary measures, but is also stifling the traditional development of improvisational training. The military prosecution is seek-

ing a significant punishment in the court-martial, including a demotion and prison term for the three officers, *Ha'aretz* reported. The IDF Spokesman dismissed the report, saying that the military prosecution's intentions were not made known to anyone. "The military prosecution's position will first be presented before the special court meeting today," the IDF Spokesman said. The 1992 training accident took the lives of Yaron Bar-Dor, 19, of Jerusalem, and Eran Ofer, 19, of Afula. They died of dehydration while on an exercise in the Negev.

## Jordan Valley residents demand funding for road improvements

THE Treasury has refused to allocate funds to improve two major roads in the Jordan Valley, leaders of the valley settlements charged, in an angry letter to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday. "It is inconceivable that the policy of the 'national [camp] government' should ignore the essential needs of the residents of the Jordan Valley," wrote David Levy,

head of the Jordan Valley Regional Council, and David Elhayani, chairman of the Jordan Valley Settlements Committee. The two said they found the Treasury's refusal especially incomprehensible, coming so soon after their meeting with Netanyahu last week, at which the prime minister stressed the importance of improving roads in the Jordan

Valley. They therefore asked him to make it clear to the Treasury that the Jordan Valley roads are a high-priority budget item. The two roads in question are the Trans-Samaria Highway and the Jordan Valley Highway. The latter has been the site of several fatal traffic accidents recently, and

Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy promised an immediate allocation of NIS 10 million last month to fix some of the worst danger spots. However, settlements committee spokeswoman Tami Atiya said this money never arrived. In total, she said, the planned improvements to this road are

expected to cost some NIS 30m. The improvements to the Trans-Samaria Highway are expected to be much more expensive, running to hundreds of millions of shekels. National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon announced last week that replacing one section of this highway would be one of his ministry's first undertakings. Former housing minister Binyamin Ben-

Eliezer said the previous government had also considered this project crucial, but had repeatedly postponed it because of the expense. Atiya said Netanyahu is scheduled to meet with Sharon, Finance Minister Dan Meridor and Foreign Minister David Levy on settlements today.

## Winning cards and numbers

IN yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the nine of spades, ace of hearts, ace of diamonds, and eight of clubs. In last night's weekly Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 9, 12, 19, 23, 44 and 46. The additional number was 42.

## Vet conference features pet disease diagnosis program

A COMPUTER program that diagnoses diseases in animals will be presented during the Eighth Congress of the World Association for Veterinary Medicine in the Lab, now being held at the Renaissance Hotel in Jerusalem. Prof. Eitan Bogin of the Hebrew University School of Veterinary Science, which organized the conference, developed the program, which quickly analyzes lab and diagnostic data on common diseases in animals. For the first time, a veterinarian who works with 20 or 30 types of creatures can quickly analyze the information he has for a speedy but accurate diagnosis. Some 300 specialists from 30 countries are taking part in the conference, which is being run under the patronage of the World Veterinary Health Organization.

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